

THE ARGOSY.

FEBRUARY, 1895.

WHEN LEAVES WERE GREEN.

BY SYDNEY HODGES.

CHAPTER V.

NEXT MORNING.

GLYN could not forget that Mrs. Courtenay Byng had hinted at some mysterious past in the life of Blanche Venables. The words were for ever ringing in his ears.

"Not looking so well as she did before—*what?*" was the question he was perpetually propounding to himself after his walk with her. It recurred to him as he opened his eyes next morning, and, having no clue, he of course went on speculating in vain.

It was a magnificent morning. The glass must have taken quite a leap upward since the day before. Glyn was out of bed and at the window long before Thomas made his appearance. He drew up the blinds and threw open the window to drink in the fresh, pure, sunny air, which filled the world with gladness.

Lupton Court was situated on an elevated plateau of the park, and Glyn looked straight over some twenty miles of magnificently wooded country, before his eyes rested on the dim, blue hills which bounded the view. Massed by the morning mists, there was a perfect sea of foliage before him, with undulations of leafage like a ground swell, and here and there a ripple, where the leaves were stirred by the breeze, as a glassy sea is stirred by a wind of June. Great herds of deer were browsing on the wide slopes of grass, half hidden here and there by square patches of bracken, which were kept in park-like order, but which served to vary the monotony of the smooth green turf. The beeches—more magnificent than any Glyn had yet seen, with their knotted moss-grown roots, and green and silver boles, stood up grandly here and there, sometimes in clumps, sometimes in solitary

stateliness. Far away to the left, a strip of blue sea closed the view, and between it and the park, a line of white steam hovering in the still air, showed the course of an early train.

Glyn leaned far out over the window-sill and met the faint entrancing odour of a magnolia which spread its great creamy petals below. The house was an old one, with broad, stone-mullioned windows and gabled ends. Quaint carvings of man, and bird, and beast, flanked and surmounted the lintels, as if the architect and workmen of the olden days had no fixed purpose, but had broken out into pleasant fancies as the work went on.

Time too, who is always our friend if we will trust him and not try to anticipate his actions, had given the finishing touches of beauty to the quaint old mansion. Not all the looms of Genoa or Lyons could surpass in richness, and softness the mosses and lichens which clothed the grey stones—a mingling of crimson and gold, and green and grey, in tints so exquisitely pure, that Glyn sighed to think how vainly his poor pigments might strive to reach their harmony. Those anomalies, the roses, too, which blush so persistently, and yet come smiling in at our windows with such perfect yet careless grace—were everywhere; in the parterres beneath; round the Gothic porch; leaning their carmine cheeks against the glossy leaves of the magnolia; tapping softly at the windows of the sleepers, as if they wished to say: “Why don’t you wake up and open your window and let in our fragrance?” Thick-clustering ivy, too, soared away so ambitiously that even the very chimneys were assailed; but it still crept upwards as if it would fain reach the blue sky above and lose itself in its dreamy depths.

“If there is one thing more than another that we have to thank God for, it is the blue sky,” said Glyn, as his eyes followed the course of the ivy into the stainless ether. “Fancy, if we had to gaze everlastingly at a canopy of crimson, or yellow, or green! how sick we should get of it; but the blue is an everlasting joy. And there goes a lark who quite agrees with me, I’m sure, for his notes seem to flood all the world below.”

Glyn dressed as quickly as possible, as he was anxious for a stroll before breakfast. He made his way across the lawn to the beech grove where the sunlight was lying on the lichened boles in great flakes and splashes of gold, and the shadows were making a blue-black tracery on the ground. The trunks of the beeches were so colossal, that a person behind one was easily hidden from view. Glyn reached the extremity of the grove near the drive, and on turning round a tree, came suddenly upon Miss Maitland.

She was seated on one of the moss-grown roots that projected above the ground. An open book was in her lap, and her head was thrown back against the tree, and as Glyn came upon her, she was gazing out absently across the park towards the distant sea. He had thought her interesting the night before; but, with the flecks of sunshine

lighting up her hair, and with the faint tint of colour which the morning walk had given to her delicate cheek, she looked quite pretty. There was a peculiar dreamy softness also in her eyes which added to the charm.

She started as Glyn's footstep fell on her ear, and half rose.

"Good morning, Miss Maitland," he said raising his cap. "I had no idea I should find anyone down. Have you been here long?"

"Not long," she answered, rising and shaking hands. "I am always awake early, and the morning is so lovely."

Glyn thought the wakefulness odd in one so young. He considered himself quite venerable in comparison with the girl before him.

"What are your studies?" he asked pointing to the book.

"The last new novel," she answered, holding it towards him.

"Ah! and not a very good one," said Glyn, running his eyes over the leaves. "Rather unhealthily sensational, if I am not mistaken."

"It is decidedly," said Sibyl with a little laugh. "Most novels are nowadays."

"Yes, the old order changeth with novels, as with everything else," said Glyn. "They must be flavoured to suit the taste of the day. Even Scott is at a discount with very young people now, and Dickens does not happen to possess half the charm for the rising generation that he did a few years ago. It is all rush and hurry now, in books as well as in real life. How lovely that bit of blue sea looks, through the trees yonder," he added.

"Yes. This is a favourite seat of mine. The view is so pretty. I come here very often."

Glyn thought of the night before, and was silent.

"By the way, what has become of Mr. Forbes?" he asked. "He was with Miss Venables and Sir Percy the day before yesterday. I thought he was staying here."

"No, he was only here for the day. He comes to stay next week, I believe. Several visitors are coming then. I am rather sorry."

Glyn thought he was too, but being a comparative stranger, he hardly liked to say so. They were sauntering back towards the house now.

"You like the quiet of this place?" he said.

"Yes. I like a few visitors, but not a great rush of them. We live so very quietly at home. When do you begin your portrait of Blanche?"

"As soon as my materials arrive, I suppose. I was to begin on Monday, but if they come sooner, there is no reason why I should not set to work."

"I hope you will let me see it sometimes as it goes on."

"Oh, by all means, if you promise not to criticise prematurely."

"I should not be capable of doing that. I know nothing of drawing, though I should like it immensely, I am sure. We are so little in the way of art down here. I think it must be so delightful to be able to paint, or to write, or do anything clever."

"But you do play and sing," answered Glyn. "That was a very sweet song you sang last night."

"Do you think so. I am so glad. They laugh at my attempts at home; my sister Lucy sings so much better. But then she has been a good deal in London, and has had lessons of a good master."

"I think after all it depends more on feeling than lessons," said Glyn. "Of course a certain amount of instruction is desirable, but the best instruction is to hear good singers; just as the best instruction in painting is to see good pictures."

"I have had no opportunity of hearing good singers, unfortunately."

"But you have been in London?"

"Only once since I was quite a child, and then papa was ill and I had to attend to him a good deal. He went up to consult a physician. My uncle, Sir Percy, was abroad, and I knew very few people. Lucy has a lot of schoolfellows living in town, and she often stays with them."

Glyn began to think Lucy must be a bit of a prig. "I am glad Miss Sibyl has found her tongue, however," he thought.

Being himself somewhat unversed in the ways of the world, he felt drawn towards this apparently unsophisticated girl who possessed a simple beauty, and a quiet grace which would have attracted most men. The meeting of last night certainly puzzled him, but it might be susceptible of an easy explanation, and it was clearly no business of his. They walked up and down the terrace chatting on all sorts of topics, until the breakfast bell rang, and Miss Venables came to look for them. Glyn thought her more beautiful under each new aspect, and in truth the cool white morning dress with scarcely any adornment did set off her graceful figure to perfection.

"What an example of early rising you have set us," she said, as she kissed Sibyl and shook hands with Glyn. "I have been watching you from my window for the last half hour."

"I don't know at what unearthly hour Miss Maitland made her appearance, for I found her here when I came down," said Glyn, laughing.

"Why, Sib," said her cousin putting her arm round her waist. "Is your conscience uneasy that you are awake so early?"

Sibyl could not avoid the gaze that was fixed upon her, and her usually pale cheek went to the tint of the roses by her side. She blushed so painfully that Glyn, who could not help noticing it, turned aside and made some remark about the view.

"Yes, it is all very lovely," said Blanche; "but I'm sure the sight of the urn will be equally appreciated by two such early risers. Papa will be impatient, too, so come along."

Thereupon they went in to breakfast.

Mrs. Courtenay Byng and Captain D'Eyncourt were the delinquents, and had not yet appeared; but the former soon came in, radiant in a morning gown, with all sorts of fussy little points and

bows and tricks about it. Captain D'Eyncourt came later, sauntering in with the air of a man who was insufferably bored at having to come to breakfast at all ; though when once fairly started he managed to dispose of a fair quantity of grilled fowl together with copious draughts of iced claret and water, averring as he did so that he could only indulge in a feeling of pity for those who were mad enough to take tea and coffee while the weather was so insufferably hot.

Glyn had a fair opportunity of observing him closely, as he was seated opposite. He was one of those not always agreeable specimens of the human race, a thoroughly handsome man. His face, indeed, as far as features and complexion were concerned, was faultless. Hair and moustache black and in perfect condition ; dark searching eyes shaded by long lashes ; nose slightly aquiline with a perfectly shaped nostril ; fine ripe lips almost hidden by a full drooping moustache ; teeth as white as the table-cloth ; a rich colour in his cheeks, and a firm blue chin with a deep cleft in the centre which gave additional character to its massiveness. The weakness of the face was in the short upper lip, though this was hidden by the moustache. Through all the range of masculine genius there is hardly a man to be found with a short upper lip.

There is little doubt that a long upper lip is a sign of strength in woman as well, but certainly not of beauty ; and perhaps after all, if woman's intellect is to run rampant, as it has done of late, men will begin to think (which the sensible ones have not done heretofore) that beauty without brains is a far more desirable thing than brains without beauty.

D'Eyncourt was a man of about five-and-thirty, though he still affected quite a juvenile attire. He was clad in a check suit of faultless cut, wore a collar very open at the neck, the hideous dog-collar not having yet come into vogue, and had an easy lounging way with him which indicated perfect satisfaction with himself. His voice, too, had something, but not much, of that affected style which calls water, watah, and better, bettah. Altogether Glyn was not prepossessed, but then, possibly, he might have set up his bristles against any man, not a relation, who called Miss Venables "Blanche," as D'Eyncourt did. The fact is Glyn envied him, and envy is a devil's snare and is akin to hate.

"So you're going to be painted, Blanche," said D'Eyncourt. "How are you to be taken?"

He did not address the question to Glyn, as under the circumstances he might have done, so Glyn sat silent. Miss Venables put matters right as was her wont.

"I shall leave that entirely to Mr. Beverley," she said.

"Ah!" said the Captain unabashed—"I suppose you'll let us into the studio now and then, Mr. Beverley?"

"Not at first, I'm afraid," said Glyn. "Perhaps when the picture is fairly advanced——"

"And if you behave properly and don't poison us with your everlasting cigarettes," struck in Miss Venables.

"What are your plans, Blanche," the Baronet asked, when he had finished his tea.

"I have hardly thought about them," Blanche answered. "Are you inclined to ride, Laura?" she asked, turning to Mrs. Byng.

Now the widow had made up her mind quite privately to another attack upon the inexperienced heart of Mr. Glyn Beverley, and for some reason or other she concluded he did not ride; so she answered accordingly.

"No, I think it will be much too hot, and I am feeling very tired to-day."

"Then," said Blanche, in the most provokingly ingenuous manner, "if you don't mind, I will ride Saladin and Mr. Beverley can have Polly. That is if you would care to go," she added, turning to Glyn.

"I should like it of all things," exclaimed Glyn. "I have so few chances in London. I have not ridden for years, and I used to have so much of it in my younger days in the country."

Now these younger days meant the time when his father was alive. Later on his mother had been left alone to that task of never-ending anxiety, the bringing up of a large family, which in some marvellous manner, known only to mothers so situated, she had managed to accomplish on a sum which in these days would not suffice to pay an ordinary butcher's bill. But the family had dwindled; sickness and disease, possibly accelerated by insufficient means, had reduced it to Glyn and one sister. Whereupon the widow instead of increasing her own comforts still practised that system of self-denial for the sake of her children, which alone should win her a place among the angels. She pinched herself to get instruction in music for her daughter and to keep Glyn going through his artistic studies, seeing that his talent was great and his applications incessant. She might have put him in an office at two pounds a week, but she preferred to stint herself and see him a great man, and now she was beginning to reap her reward.

It so happened that Saladin, to whom Blanche Venables had referred, was a very favourite mount of Mrs. Byng's, so easy in its action and so lamb-like in temper that it was the only horse that fair dame cared to ride. Polly was Blanche's special property. Not one of your slim, spider-like park hacks, but a shapely brown mare with bone and breed combined, and well up to even Glyn's weight, so that Blanche was a mere feather on its back, which fact enabled them together to perform almost incredible feats.

Blanche turned somewhat coldly to the Captain.

"You will go?" she said.

"Yes, certainly, if you do!" he answered.

"And Sib, you will take Lurline as usual, I suppose?"

"Thanks! Lurline is my favourite," said Miss Maitland.

"You look like a couple of sylphs, I must say," pursued Blanche. "Lurline is so marvellously like an antelope that I should doubt if she could carry anyone a pound heavier than yourself."

"Then you and I will have to entertain each other, Mrs. Byng;" said the Baronet with a smile.

"So it seems," the widow responded with visible chagrin.

"I've brought Kitty," D'Eyncourt quietly remarked.

"Brought Kitty!" exclaimed everybody.

Glyn wondered who on earth "Kitty" was, that she should cause such general astonishment.

"Indeed I have."

"But you don't mean to ride her?" said the Baronet still staring hard at the Captain.

"Indeed I do. I rode her here last night, and I don't see why I shouldn't ride her this morning."

"You certainly want to break your neck," said the Baronet decisively.

"You'll be killed before our very eyes," said Blanche.

"Simple madness," said Mrs. Byng.

Sibyl said nothing, but sat attentively regarding the worked corner of her pocket-handkerchief and looking pale.

Glyn requested to be enlightened as to the peculiar nature of the Kitty in question, since she had caused such perturbation of spirit.

"Well, she's a chestnut mare of mine," said the Captain; "and is responsible for three broken collar bones, a broken leg, and a dislocated shoulder, since I have had her. How many people she killed or maimed before, I wouldn't venture to say; but I should think their name is legion. She came to me with about as bad a character as a four-legged brute could possess, and she has maintained it."

"But why on earth did you buy her?" asked Glyn.

"Because I've rather a fancy for subduing things in general, especially when they oppose me. I've had my own way with Kitty hitherto, and I mean to keep it."

The Captain set his lips with a look that was not pleasant to behold. Glyn observed him closely. "I should not like to have that man for an enemy," he thought.

CHAPTER VI.

CHIROMANCY.

"You would like to look round and select a room to paint in, would you not?" said the Baronet as they rose from the breakfast-table.

"Thanks," answered Glyn. "I suppose we shall not be starting just yet," he added looking at Miss Venables.

"No, not for an hour at least. I have some things I must attend to first," said Blanche. "Laura, you know the house well; I depute you to take Mr. Beverley round and let him see the rooms."

"I shall want a northerly aspect, if possible," said Glyn.

"Then the room next the library would be a good one; but you can choose whichever you like."

"Come along, Mr. Beverley," said the widow, who was evidently not disinclined for the task, "I will show you all round."

They crossed the hall where the sunlight was streaming in through the open doors.

"How lovely it is," said the widow, "I quite envy you your ride. It is too bad to leave me all alone."

"But I understood you declined coming," said Glyn.

"I thought some of you would remain at home," answered the widow with a little pout. "However, I daresay I can amuse myself. Now, would this room do?" she asked. "It has a nice dark paper, and that you like, don't you?"

"Not always. I think it best to keep ladies' portraits rather light in tone as a rule. It is a high window, though, and the light is good. I fancy this room will do very well."

"And you will want a cloth half way up the window, and something in the way of a throne, won't you? You see, I know all about it."

"I don't have the cloth too high. I want more of a diffused light. We don't go in for the black shadow under the nose and that sort of thing nowadays. That was a very funny system which the old painters pursued. They used to paint quite black shadows on the face and then put a landscape background, the two things being utterly incongruous."

"In what way?"

"Why, you never get black shadows on the face out of doors, there are too many reflected lights. You only get them when a room is darkened and the light comes from one direction."

"I see," said Mrs. Byng, throwing herself languidly into an easy chair and turning melting eyes on the artist. "Dear me, how hot it is! Don't you think a turn on the terrace would be nice?"

"If you like. This room will do very well to paint in. We need not bother any more about that now."

"*Allons*, then. We can go through the window of the next room. It is shorter."

She led the way followed by Glyn. As they approached the window leading to the terrace, she stopped.

"Sib and the Captain are there already. A case of the spider and the fly," she said.

There was a touch almost of malice in her tone. Glyn could not help smiling.

"Rather severe, Mrs. Byng," he said.

"Not a bit more than the occasion calls for. He is like a certain gentleman not to be named, seeking whom he may devour."

"You don't like him?"

The widow turned upon him suddenly, the look of spite still in her face.

"Do you?" she asked.

The question came so quickly that Glyn was taken aback. He was not prepared to criticise the guests at Lupton the day after his arrival. Still he felt bound to be honest.

"I am not particularly impressed, I admit; still I know so little of him that it is hardly fair to give an opinion; he may be an awfully good fellow for anything I know."

"He *may*," said the widow, with still the little spiteful emphasis. "Shall we join them, or would you rather not spoil their *tête-à-tête*."

"Just as you please. You are my cicerone, you know."

They descended the few steps to the terrace. As they did so D'Eyncourt and his companion sat down side by side on a garden seat. The Captain put out his hand palm upwards, and Sib with her slender forefinger appeared to be tracing certain lines upon it.

The widow ran forward quickly. "Why, Sib, what are you about?" she said.

Sib started slightly as she heard the widow's voice and withdrew her hand quickly.

"Only telling Captain D'Eyncourt what you told me," she answered in some confusion.

"How can you be so foolish!" answered the widow, looking somewhat confused herself.

"Why, you told me you believed in it," said Sib.

"Nonsense, child. I told you nothing of the sort," answered the widow.

"What is it? palmistry?" said Glyn laughing. "Everybody must believe in that, of course. It's as true as astrology, or alchemy, or spiritualism."

"And you don't believe in any of them, I can see," said the widow. "But do you know anything about the hand?"

"Well, as an artist I ought to."

"Oh, yes, that of course, but I mean about the lines?"

"Yes, I believe I know all the jargon; the line of life, the line of head, the line of heart, the mounts of Jupiter, Saturn, Apollo and Venus, etc. But what really amuses me is the intense conviction of the old writers on the subject. They, at any rate, were thoroughly in earnest."

"I suppose the old astrologers had just as strong a conviction, and certainly the spiritualists of the present day have," said D'Eyncourt.

They were all standing together now, and at this moment Miss Venables came towards them from the drawing-room.

"What is this solemn conclave about?" she exclaimed as she drew near.

"A discussion of the deepest importance," said the widow. "Mr. Beverley is great at palmistry. He knows all the lines and mounts, and believes in it firmly."

"That is a decided libel, Mrs. Byng," said Beverley.

"Well, we will put him to the test, then," said Miss Venables. "He shall read our fortunes. Come, Captain D'Eyncourt, put out your hand."

"By all means. I have been such an unlucky dog hitherto, that if Mr. Beverley prognosticates any good luck in the future, I shall be infinitely obliged to him."

Glyn thought the joke had gone far enough. "I'm afraid I cannot undertake the rôle of a prophet," he said, turning away.

"Oh, you can't get out of it that way," said the widow. "You said you knew the lines; come, Captain D'Eyncourt, put out your hand."

"Certainly, I am most anxious to know my fate."

Glyn glanced at his out-stretched hand a moment, and his attention seemed suddenly arrested.

"Well, that is rather odd," he said.

"What is?" asked the Captain.

"Well, if I believed in it for one moment I should hesitate to tell you. But as I don't, I may point out that your line of life ends somewhat abruptly. Unusually so, in fact."

"And what does that mean?"

"Why, by all the rules of palmistry, it means that you will come to a violent end; but I don't think you need distress yourself," Glyn added, laughing.

"I don't mean to," said the Captain, "though I daresay it is what I deserve. But is it not time for us to be starting. We shall lose the best of the morning."

"I think it is time we got into our habits," said Miss Venables. "The horses will be round in ten minutes."

They turned towards the house, Miss Venables leading the way. Sib Maitland lingered behind by the side of Glyn.

"You don't really believe in it, do you, Mr. Beverley?" she said in a low tone.

"Believe in it, no, of course not. How can the lines of the hand possibly foretell the future. You may as well believe that the stars can. Of course, certain hands go with certain temperaments, and therefore the hand is to some extent an index of character, but not of the future. It is sheer nonsense."

"I am glad you think so, but Mrs. Byng told me she did believe in it, and showed me the lines."

"I fancy Mrs. Byng may have taken it up like any other fad, *pour passer le temps*. She will get some other belief before long and forget all about this."

"You have not much faith in her, evidently."

"I don't say that. She is very amusing and very good-natured ; but I should say her fancies are like the man's sweethearts in the song, 'The youngest and the newest is the dearest of them all.' "

CHAPTER VII.

KITTY.

A QUARTER of an hour later there was a grand trampling in the drive in front of the hall door as the grooms brought round the horses.

Lurline and Saladin came first, the former with long sloping fetlocks and a step as light as a fawn. Not much to look at in the way of strength, certainly, but a pretty graceful hack for a light-weight. Saladin was a model of an Arab, with the long curved neck, hollow back and square haunch peculiar to that breed. Cream-white, also, from nose to heel, and with mane and tail like white floss silk. Polly, already described, came next, with fine points and showy action, a safe £300 whenever you liked to put her in the market, and then, with a stableman on each side of her, came Kitty.

To look at her you would have said she was as quiet as a lamb. The presence of two men seemed a farce ; but her well-known qualities caused her to be held in respect and to be waited on by a large retinue of anxious attendants. She was in colour bright chestnut, had a long, easy stride, throwing her feet well out and bringing them down firmly from the full stretch. She kept her head down pertinaciously, showing the fine curve of her neck. The only evidence of restlessness about her at present was the quick champing of her snaffle, which went on incessantly.

"I think you had better mount and get away, and leave me a clear space and no favour," said D'Eyncourt. "There's no saying where my lady may go in the first five minutes. She took a standing jump over the gate of the drive at Oaklands last week, while the groom who rode her was trying to open it. It measured four feet eleven perpendicular. The man gave me warning next day."

So the ladies and Glyn mounted and got away, but curiosity was aroused, and fifty yards off they stopped to look.

Kitty was still head down at the hall door with a man on each side. Except for the champing she was as motionless as a rock ; but out of the corner of her eye she was regarding the Captain carefully.

The man on the off-side held down one stirrup, while the Captain laid a hand on Kitty's mane, and lifted his foot to the other.

As his toe touched the iron, it seemed to send an electric thrill through the mare. She went straight up on end without a moment's warning, the two men hanging on to her like grim death. Fighting out wildly with her fore-legs, she turned as on a pivot, and came down again the other way, leaving her foes baffled and discomfited.

They coaxed her round again, and again the performance was gone through, as if it were a rehearsal for a pantomime.

"Confound the brute, when she begins this game she keeps it up for an hour," said the Captain. "Bring her close to the step."

Kitty did not object to this. From his more commanding position, the Captain again gathered the reins in his hand and clutched the mare's mane. This time he was too quick for her, for in an instant he was in the saddle.

The spectators trembled, the grooms flew on one side; but you never knew how to meet Kitty's freaks. Widening her fore-feet, she planted them in front of her as firmly as two young oak trees, and so stood stock still, the champ, champ, champ, still going on as if nothing had happened.

There stood Kitty, and there sat the Captain looking the picture of patience, but wondering much what was to be the next move. It was a somewhat ridiculous position. Strong measures might have proved fatal, and even conciliatory ones must not be tried yet. Something, however, must be done, so squaring his reins, he touched the mare lightly with his heels. The champ, champ, stopped for a moment and then went on as before, but nothing else happened.

D'Eyncourt had any amount of patience with a horse—a great quality in the rider—but he was keeping the others waiting, and this farce must be ended somehow. He must risk strong measures after all, so raising his hunting-crop quickly he brought it down with a smart stroke on the mare's flank.

If a volcano had opened at her feet, the effect could not have been greater. The mare gave a single bound half across the sweep, and then dashed straight away down the drive at a mad gallop, going like the wind past Blanche and her party and disappearing round the bend by some beeches in two seconds.

"What madness it is to ride such a creature," said Blanche, as they followed on quickly. "There she goes, I declare, straight across the park."

And at that moment D'Eyncourt came into sight half a mile off, going across the smooth turf like the wind. The startled deer fled from his path, the wind hissed past his ears, the ground seemed to fly from under him. Edging gradually away to the right with so gentle a pressure, that Kitty, wily as she was, hardly suspected it, D'Eyncourt brought her gradually round towards the drive, and presently came up; Kitty one lather of sweat, and still tugging like a demon at the bridle.

"Not bad for a beginning, was it?" said the Captain with a laugh, "but I think I've got my lady in hand now."

"I hope so," said Blanche, "for if she intends to keep up that game all day, I don't see the use of your coming with us."

"Oh, she'll go quietly enough now," rejoined the Captain, edging up beside Blanche.

"I want you to take Sibyl under your wing," said Blanche. "Mr. Beverley is to be my preux chevalier to-day. I am anxious to show him the views."

"Then you had better drop behind," answered the Captain, looking anything but pleased. "Kitty has a most distinct objection to keeping in the rear, and now that she is behaving respectably, we had better humour her."

So Blanche fell back to where Glyn was riding with Miss Maitland, and that young lady was ordered to the front, and Glyn's temper was evidently improved by the arrangement.

"A magnificent rider," said Glyn with his eyes still upon the Captain.

"Yes, he does everything well," answered Blanche. "He is one of the cleverest men I know."

Glyn felt another twinge of envy. "I suppose he has seen and done most things," he answered.

"Oh, yes. There is nothing he has not seen or done."

"Has he left the service?"

"Yes. He was in the Carabineers, but sold out four years ago when his father died. He has enough to live upon, and has expectations from an uncle, a Mr. Dalrymple, I believe."

Fields, trees and hedges were passed in rapid succession. The fresh sunny air and the cool breeze from off the distant sea sent the colour mantling into the face of Glyn's companion. The impudent breeze, indeed, sported with her hair and sent it in pretty little waves about her eyes and forehead. The rapid motion and the bright morning seemed to transfigure Blanche. The sober, subdued look of home gave way to the sparkling sunny smile she had worn when Glyn first saw her in the wood. "Only the day before yesterday," he mused, "and yet it seems an age. So many events are crowded into the time—such new thoughts and hopes, that I cannot believe it is only two days."

They were increasing their pace, for the others had gone on ahead. The rapid motion exhilarated like champagne. Their horses seemed to share the excitement. Even the staid Saladin was deporting himself in a manner quite unworthy of the gravity of the great Eastern Potentate whose name he bore; and as to Polly, she was throwing the foam-flakes from her bit and springing through the air with a lightness which sent a feeling of buoyancy to the very heart of her rider.

They kept this up for some two or three miles, the glow deepening in Blanche's cheek, the smile on her lips and in her eyes brightening to absolute sunshine, and the breeze taking positive liberties with her luxuriant hair.

Presently they espied D'Eyncourt and Miss Maitland away to the left, riding slowly up a shoulder of the downs that shut them out from the sea. Glyn and his companion left the road, and putting their horses into a canter across the springing turf, soon came up with them.

"Where are you going, Captain D'Eyncourt?" asked Blanche, as they fell into line on the hill-side.

"We thought of striking across this hill and getting down to the beach. Have you any objection?"

"None whatever. I should like it, and Mr. Beverley will enjoy a breath of the sea."

The Captain was evidently not in a good temper yet.

"Shall we get on again, Miss Maitland?" he asked.

"Yes, if you like," the girl answered in her quiet tones, and so, the slope being easier, they went on at a canter while Glyn and Miss Venables again fell into the rear.

The soft carpet of herbage upon which their horses' hoofs fell with the faintest possible sound; the pretty wild flowers of purple and gold and blue which studded the thymy turf; the bright sunshine; the purple cloud shadows which met them on their way; the strip of pure blue sea which now opened to the right as they neared the crest of the downs, and that everlasting chorister, the lark, whose song of praise goes up at morn and noon and dewy eve, what more was wanting with such a companion by his side to fill Glyn's cup of happiness to the brim?

Presently they left the downs and came upon the sea-shore. The waves were rolling in over the flat sands in long, even bars of white foam, and with a ceaseless, monotonous musical murmur—the result, as Tyndall tells us, of the bursting of innumerable air-bubbles. The sea-breeze with nothing to intercept it, brought its fresh, salt flavour to their lips and came as a pleasant antidote to the beams of noon which were now beating fiercely on the yellow sands and on the low, grassy flats where red cattle grazed, or floundered in the cooling dykes, switching the flies from their tortured flanks and tossing them in myriads from their restless heads.

The tide was low and they rode far out on to the sands among the tide pools bordered with slippery green rocks. Stray star-fish lay flabby and helpless in the sun. Wandering crabs skittered off at their approach and, seeking the nearest pool, indulged in the pleasure and protection of self-inhumation in the soft sand of the bottom.

Glyn seemed to think a new world of rapture was opening before him, but great happiness is sometimes rudely dashed, as it was at this moment by the Captain. He and Miss Maitland had somehow fallen behind. He now came riding up and edged in unceremoniously between Glyn and Miss Venables.

"I want to tell you about the Fortescues, Blanche. You know I was at Edith's wedding."

Blanche didn't appear particularly anxious to hear the intelligence, but without positive rudeness she could not decline. Miss Maitland was alone in the rear, so Glyn was constrained to fall back upon that young lady.

"What a charming ride, Miss Maitland, is it not?"

"Yes, but I am rather tired, and are we not going a very long way?"

"Do you think so? It had not occurred to me. I suppose we are in Miss Venables' hands with respect to distance."

"Oh, but she can ride any number of miles without fatigue. It is quite wonderful to see her follow the hounds on Polly. But please don't say I said so."

"Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know. She doesn't quite like to get a reputation for riding across country, although she does it so well."

D'Eyncourt rode on beside Blanche. "Do you intend to keep me at arm's length all day?" he asked.

"I must be polite to strangers."

"Who is this young fellow? You picked him up in the woods, didn't you?"

"Yes, we picked him up in the woods."

"Do you know anything about him?"

"Only that he is clever and agreeable. We don't usually inquire into an artist's pedigree. Talent is their passport to society; to my thinking a better one than that of birth."

They were nearing the waves. D'Eyncourt had become forgetful of the tricky nature of his mare, she had been going so quietly; but Kitty's was a nature which regarded every novelty as an offence, and she was eyeing the circling foam-wreaths, which came almost up to her feet, with some disfavour. D'Eyncourt took up his companion's last remark.

"Eccentric as usual," he said.

"If you choose to think so," Blanche answered, "but in this case I am *not*, even from your point of view. Mr. Beverley's mother was a Glyn. The Glyns were acquaintances of my father. A very good family indeed."

"And you intend to shut yourself up with him all day? Quiet! you brute," he exclaimed angrily as Kitty swerved from an encroaching wave.

Kitty's pricked ear went backwards as if checking off the insult and treasuring it up for the future. But she took no further notice.

"As far as may be necessary," Blanche answered quietly, "but," she added, "I should think that can be but of little consequence to you."

"You think so."

"I *hope* so—you remember the conditions of your return."

"I do, but I had hoped that time would have somewhat modified those conditions."

"Time will never modify them," Blanche answered in a determined tone. Kitty swerved again. A dark look flitted across D'Eyncourt's face, and with a muttered imprecation he brought his cane down heavily on her shoulder.

The mare fairly uttered a scream. She went straight up on end without an instant's warning, toppled, and came down heavily backwards with the Captain underneath.

Miss Maitland and Glyn were fifty yards behind. He was hastening forward to the rescue when he heard a low cry by his side and turned to see his companion looking as white as a sheet and evidently about to fall.

He sprang from his saddle and caught her as she fell towards him. She gave one scared look at the prostrate form of D'Eyncourt, and then consciousness passed away, and she lay fainting in Glyn's arms,

CHAPTER VIII.

BLANCHE TO THE RESCUE.

HERE was a pretty kettle of fish! imagine the *mise-en-scene*! D'Eyncourt flat on his back on the sands, with Kitty struggling and kicking over him and trying to get on her legs. Miss Venables transfixed with horror on the back of Saladin, who was sniffing at his fallen companion. Polly and Lurline free as the winds trotting round with heads high in air and snorts of astonishment. Glyn supporting Miss Maitland's head as she lay stretched on the sand, and the creeping waves coming on with stealthy, relentless footsteps up towards the very spot where these luckless ones lay.

Glyn did not waste much time over his fair burden, however. A faint, even at its worst, is not to be named in the same day with a man with a horse on the top of him.

Laying Miss Maitland on the sands, he hastened to D'Eyncourt, who remained so perfectly motionless that Glyn thought he must be dead. Miss Venables had sprung to the ground, and although she also looked white and scared, she did not lose her presence of mind, but hastened with Glyn to the Captain's side. Kitty was up again by this time, and was putting the breadth of the sands between herself and the rest of the party with all convenient speed, lashing out at intervals as an intimation that it would be advisable to let her alone.

"Surely he is not dead," gasped Blanche, in a horrified whisper, as she knelt beside the Captain on the sand.

Glyn placed his hand over D'Eyncourt's heart.

"I trust not," he answered. "He is terribly hurt; but there is life in him still. What on earth is to be done? The tide is close upon us, and is coming in like a sluice. I could manage one, but there is Miss Maitland. Stay, though," he added, "she is so light that I think I can manage to carry her to the beach, and still be back before the tide reaches us."

He lifted Sibyl's light form in his arms, and hurried with her across the sands. Depositing her by the side of a little rill which ran down

among the shingle, he sprinkled some water on her face. Signs of returning animation began to appear. Glyn, however, had no time to lose. He hurried back as fast as possible.

Blanche had found a pool in the sands, and was moistening D'Eyncourt's face with her wetted handkerchief.

Even in this emergency, Glyn could not but admire the wonderful calmness of the girl under such exceptionally trying circumstances. He could see, moreover, that it was not the calmness of indifference, for varying emotions were flitting over her face, and her hand trembled in her self-imposed task. It was the strength arising from a strong sense of duty.

"Isn't it possible to utilise Polly in carrying him up?" she asked.

"I couldn't possibly mount with him in my arms, and it would injure him to put him up alone. There is nothing for it but to carry him."

"But it is such a terrible distance."

"That cannot be helped. I must do the best I can, and at once."

Without another word Glyn lifted the Captain bodily. Strong as he was, it was as much as he could accomplish, and after staggering a few yards only he was compelled to stop.

As he did so, he heard a cry from Blanche, and looked round. She was pointing—with a look of terror in her face—towards the land. Glyn followed the direction of her hand, and saw a sight which filled him almost with despair.

The portion of the sand he was on was raised—a sort of rounded ridge—and between it and the beach a long line of water was coming rapidly in from the sea, forming a shining barrier, which cut him off from his goal.

He turned to look at his companion. She had recovered her presence of mind.

"Can you help me to mount Polly?" she said. "There is nothing for it but to get help."

"But you cannot ride on a man's saddle," Glyn answered.

"Oh yes, when I am once seated. Help me up quickly."

Glyn lifted her into the saddle, and the next moment she was going across the sands at full speed.

Glyn glanced around. The tide was close upon him now, and the channel near the shore was rapidly widening. Immediate action was imperative.

Lifting his helpless burthen again, he struggled in desperation towards the line of water. In a few minutes he was at the brink, but the incoming tide was loosening the sand. His feet slipped, he floundered about in the water and nearly fell.

"I must give it up," he said. "What is to be done? Will she get help in time. I cannot leave him here to drown."

He heard a cry and looked up. There was Miss Venables riding back as fast as she had gone, and behind her was a man in a cart

coming over the flats beyond the beach as fast as the horse could trot.

"Thank God," cried Glyn with a mighty sensation of relief. "Her presence of mind has saved us."

She came bounding and splashing through the water, and the next moment was beside him all flushed with the unwonted exertion and the painful excitement.

"Thank heaven, I saw the cart the moment I got across the sands. I do hope we are safe now, that is if he is——"

She stopped suddenly and looked at the lifeless form which Glyn was supporting in his arms. A shudder seemed to pass over her.

"Do not distress yourself," Glyn said hastily. "He is alive beyond doubt."

In a minute or two the cart came up. Luckily it was an empty one with only some straw and a sack or two in the bottom. With the assistance of the man, Glyn lifted the Captain into it and laid him on the straw. Then he got in himself and was taken across the channel on to the higher ground, Blanche following on Polly.

Now that she had accomplished her task, she showed some signs of giving way. The strain had been such as few women could have borne. Luckily they found Saladin grazing quietly on the short herbage at the top of the sands. Glyn quickly transferred Miss Venables to her own steed, while he himself went off on Polly to look after Sib Maitland.

He found that young lady sitting up on the slope of the beach in a state of great perturbation and as yet unable to move. As soon as she saw Glyn she made an effort to rise but he begged her to keep still.

"Oh, Mr. Beverley! what has happened," she cried as he approached. "It is all too dreadful. Is he alive?"

"Yes," answered Glyn confidently, "perhaps he is not so much hurt, after all. He is snug in a cart now. Don't alarm yourself."

"It is so dreadfully foolish of me," Sibyl went on, "but I never could bear to see an accident."

"Did you notice which way Lurline went?" said Glyn to divert her thoughts.

"I have not an idea. I feel quite bewildered," said Sib, shuddering again at the bare remembrance of the scene.

"Then I think you had better mount Polly if you can ride on this saddle," Glyn said springing to the ground. "The man tells me there is an inn over yonder. We can all go to it until we can get help and catch the horses."

"Oh, no, I can walk quite well now. Don't mind me. Do get assistance for Captain D'Eyncourt as soon as possible. I shall be so distressed if I delay you. I will follow you."

Glyn thought it might be as well for her not to see the Captain in his present plight.

"Are you quite sure you can come alone?" he asked.

"Yes, quite sure. Do go on, I am sure you must be wanted."

Glyn thought so too, so he hastened back to the cart, which was now crossing the flats to the little inn. He found Blanche had gone on to prepare for their arrival.

Very soon they had D'Eyncourt on an old-fashioned sofa in the inn's best parlour, and a man was despatched on Polly for the nearest doctor. Before he arrived, however, the united exertions of Glyn and Miss Venables had brought the patient round. He opened his eyes but closed them again with a spasm of pain.

"What on earth is the matter with me?" he said. "This pain is horrible."

Glyn was relieved. It was by no means the voice of a dying man, though he was evidently in great suffering. He put some brandy to his lips, begging him to lie quite still until the doctor came. Then Blanche went to the next room to see after Sib and to tell her that consciousness had returned, upon which Sib burst into tears, somewhat to Blanche's amazement.

In due course the doctor arrived and examined the patient. It was not a cheerful report that he gave. There was a severe cut on the head and an arm was broken, besides a fractured rib.

The doctor took Glyn outside.

"It is out of the question moving him. He must remain here. I will set the bones as soon as possible, and meanwhile you must keep him perfectly quiet."

"Do you think him in danger?"

"Impossible to say at present. There may be internal injuries. There is dilatation of the pupils. He must have struck his head very severely in falling, but the effects may pass off. You must keep him perfectly quiet."

"I will stay here with him."

"That will be the best arrangement. I know the woman of the house. She is quite reliable and will, I am sure, help you as much as possible. The ladies had better go home. It must have been a great shock to them."

"It was indeed."

"Well, I will return as soon as I can, and then we will make all snug."

The doctor departed, and Glyn went to give the ladies his report. Presently the man who had been sent to look for Lurline and Kitty returned with the former, but the latter was nowhere to be seen.

This was soon explained. Within two hours, to the amazement of everybody, a carriage arrived from Lupton and Sir Percy was seen stepping out.

"What a merciful thing!" exclaimed Glyn when he saw the Baronet; "but how on earth did he know about it?"

Kitty was not so mad as she seemed. She had taken the wisest

course and gone straight back to Lupton at full gallop, rousing all the villages and hamlets as she passed. On arriving at Lupton she galloped straight into the stable-yard.

"Heaven save us!" exclaimed the old coachman, who was lounging on a corn chest. "Somebody must be killed."

He turned Kitty into a loose box and then went straight to the house, bouncing in upon Sir Percy and Mrs. Byng without ceremony, just as they were going to luncheon.

"What on earth is the matter?" cried Sir Percy, seeing the man's scared face.

"Don't know, Sir Percy, but something awful must ha' happened. Kitty has come back without the Captain and all in a lather of sweat."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Sir Percy, "I knew something dreadful would happen if he persisted in riding that brute! Why, he may have broken his neck!"

As the words passed his lips Mrs. Courtenay Byng turned quite crimson and then deadly pale. She moved away to hide her confusion, but quickly recovered herself.

"What shall you do?" she asked.

"Do? Start at once and see what it means. But where is one to go? They were going towards the beach, weren't they?"

"Yes; I heard them say they meant to go quite down to the sea. You will let me go with you?"

"Quite unnecessary, my dear. It will only complicate matters."

"But I think I ought to go. I may be of use," the widow answered anxiously. She seemed unusually disturbed. Sir Percy could not help noticing it.

"No, no, my dear. You are too much upset already, and no wonder. You will be more useful here in preparing for any emergency. The doctor ought to be sent for, too. Dear, dear, to think that people will be so idiotic! Let us hope, at least, that he is not killed!"

(To be continued.)



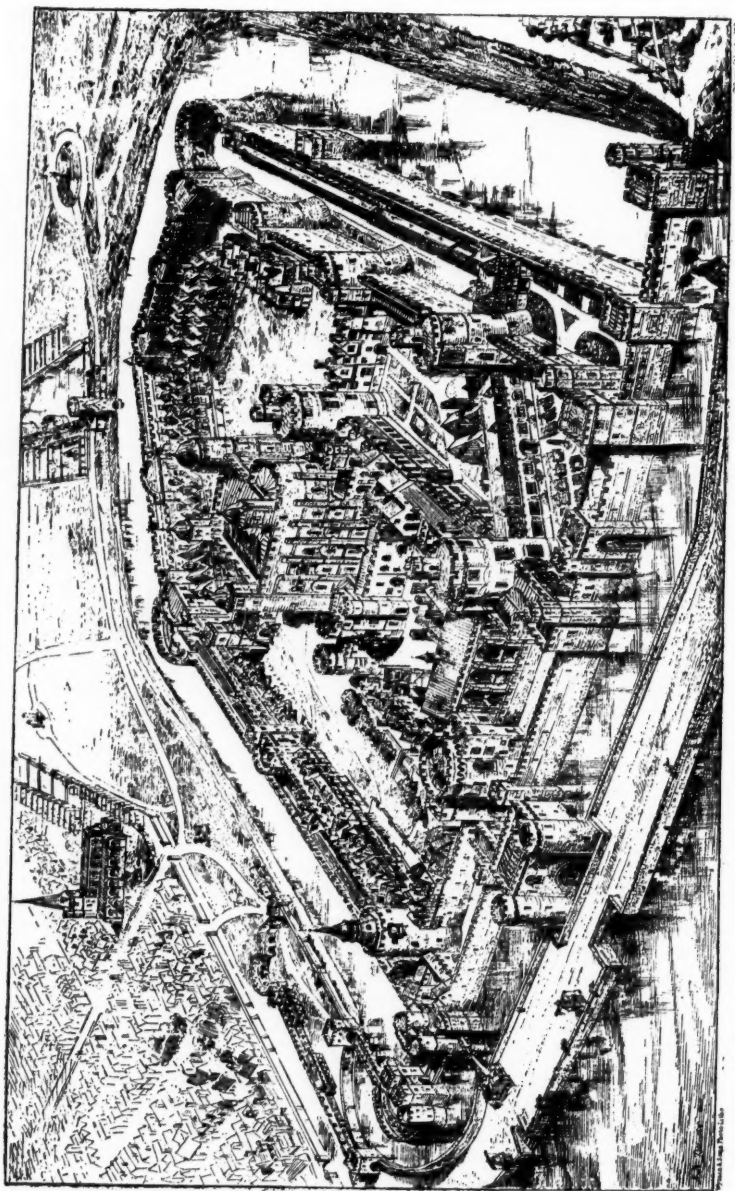
SOMETIMES.

HE AND SHE.

- HE. "WHAT? do you really mean that you prefer
These close hot rooms to country lanes, and hives
Low branching, full of bees and summer stir?"
- SHE. "I do—sometimes.
Though you, on your part, ask me to receive
And place your crowing cocks and village chimes
Higher than Jean de Rescke——"
- HE. "By your leave
I do—sometimes.
But pray regard it as a harmless fad—
Is Captain Longbow back from foreign climes?
And do you ever meet him? (horrid cad!)"
- SHE. "Oh, yes—sometimes;
You know, we've known each other all our lives,
And he's not married yet—that worst of crimes.
On dit though, you love maidens less than wives."
- HE. "I do—sometimes.
Men's wives are generally polite and kind,
Less apt to take offence or count one's dimes
Than girls; in fact, more leniently inclined."
- SHE. "No doubt—sometimes.
That little Mrs. Ermine, is she still
So Ritualistic, with her nones and primes,
And do you see her, now her husband's ill?"
- HE. "Oh yes—sometimes.
I must be going."
- SHE. "I'm so glad we met;
We're moving also, on to Lady Symes'—
(This treadmill life, this same old weary set
I hate—sometimes!)"
- HE. "Maude, can one ever see beneath your mask?
Below these artificial mocks and mimes
Is there a heart? I hardly dare to ask?"
- SHE (*hurriedly*) "Perhaps—sometimes.
Come in at four some afternoon to tea—
Aunt sleeps till five—we'll talk about your rhymes."
- HE (*rapturously*) "What! have you read my book?"
- SHE. "You sent it me;
I have—sometimes!"

G. P. STUART.

THE BOWLER, JANUARY 8, 1813.



THE TOWER OF LONDON IN THE TIME OF ELIZABETH.

A MASTER-BUILDER OF CASTLES IN THE AIR.

BY GLEESON WHITE.

IMPROVISATION in music, both at the present day and in those earlier times when poetry scarce existed save as lyrics recited to instrumental accompaniments, is accepted as an art that delights the improvisator and his audience equally.

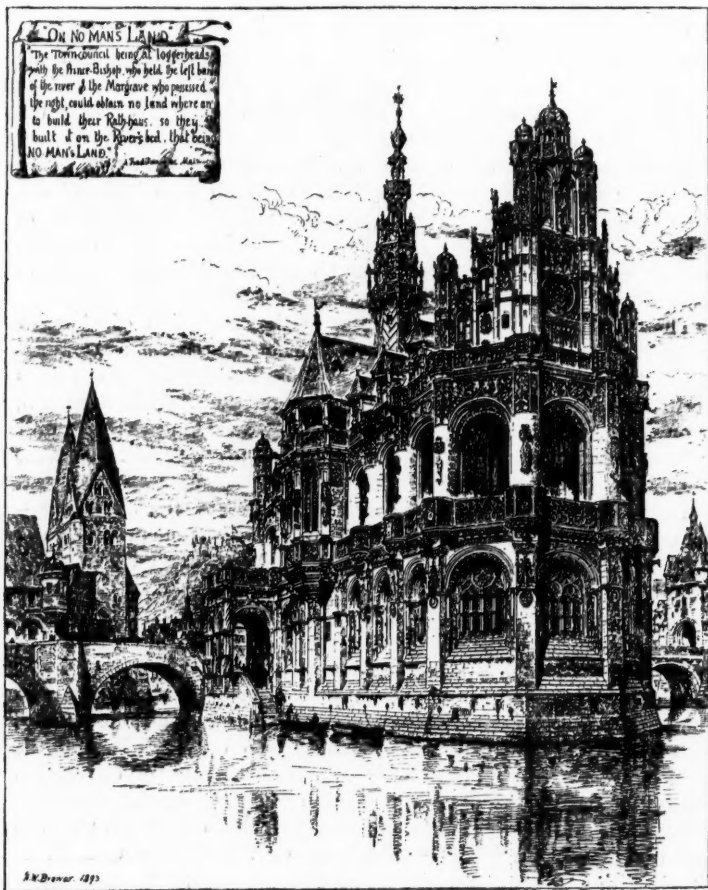
In architecture, of all the arts, an improvisation seems well-nigh impossible at first blush. Yet recalling our own ideal houses built, often enough, in the borderland between waking and dreaming, or remembering the marvellous edifices of the Arabian Nights, one sees that the architecture of castles in the air must needs surpass that of any gross material fabrics.

There are two distinct departments in the profession of planning castles in the air. The first is pure invention wherein no ground-plan is too vast, no substance too costly, and no engineering obstacles worth taking into account; the other is the re-edification in our mind, or on paper, of old buildings long since destroyed, and existing only in legends, in more or less trustworthy pictures, or in ruined fragments on their original site.

The artist whose work is to be considered here—Mr. H. W. Brewer—is a past-master of both these methods. Under his facile pencil groups of imaginary buildings grow into existence as real as any known to mortal vision. Palaces, cathedrals, towers, bridges, and all the features of architecture that delight us in real life, appear underneath his pencil with the verisimilitude of actuality. In these you may seek in vain for aught that is not possible. For unlike the Eastern romancers, he fills no windows with precious stones, nor shows you domes suspended in mid-air like Mahomet's coffin. In a word, fancy, apparently untrammelled and bent solely on accomplishing the picturesque, is really working with orderly acceptance of convention and tradition. Forgetting all difficulties, and imagining that the architect has the cheque book of a millionaire at his command, you feel that the drawings might be submitted to the County Council of Utopia with a most reasonable chance of acceptance.

In the other department, the reconstruction of demolished buildings, we find archaeology and history added to the mere mechanism of architecture, and restraining the invention within clearly defined limits. Yet this does not necessarily imply less strain on the imagination. To image again that which has been practically forgotten, or to describe what never existed, are efforts nearly equal in their difficulty. The need to rebuild cities of past days upon actual ground-plans, to

raise anew the walls upon foundations of which a bare hint remains, or to complete the cubic mass of a building from a portion of its façade alone, may be called the poetry of architecture. To attempt this in masonry and brickwork might arouse the indignation of a society committed to the preservation of ancient buildings; to do it



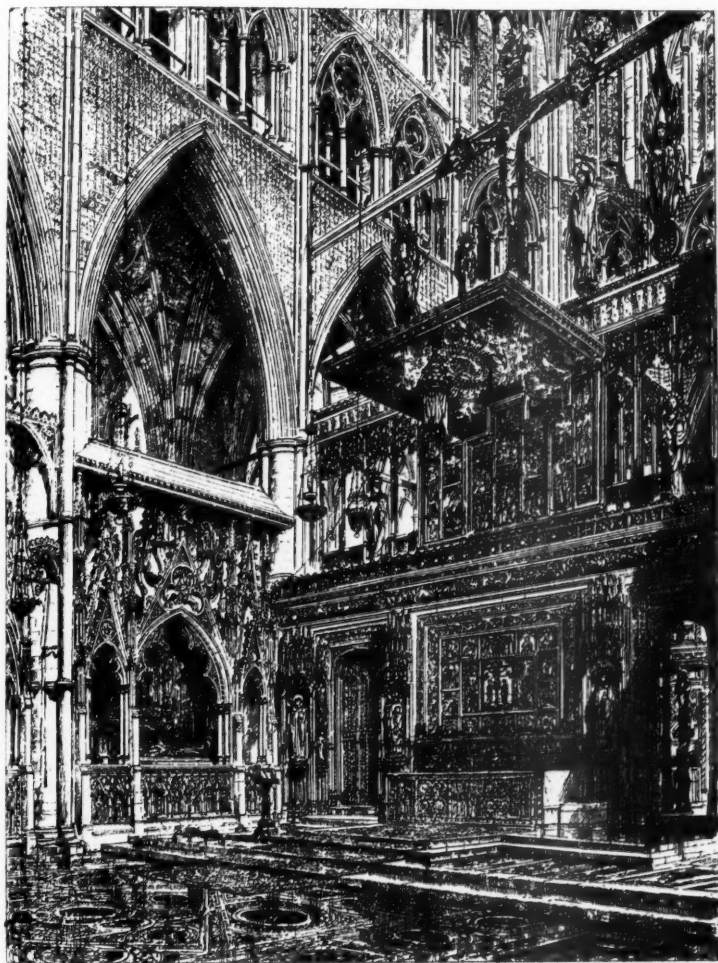
ON NO MAN'S LAND.

on paper is to earn the gratitude of all lovers of the past, and it is in this particular domain that Mr. Brewer appeals most forcibly to the average person who has no special reverence for the triumphs of architecture, dissociated from its history.

To-day we are apt to be exacting in requiring precise accuracy in

matters of fact. A Shakespeare may place Bohemia by the sea-shore, or a Garrick play a Roman Emperor in a full-bottomed wig, and leave nobody a penny the wiser. But woe betide a modern writer, or a

THE BUILDER JULY 2 1882



THE OLD HIGH ALTAR OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.
RESTORED FROM ANCIENT DRAWINGS AND MONUMENTS, BY MR. H. W. GOSWOLD.

modern painter who displays glaring anachronisms on his canvas. In the paintings of Dutch artists you shall see the towns of Palestine, or the cities of the Roman Empire all portrayed as Dutch villages; as in the old Italian masters every period, historically remote or near, was accompanied by the architecture of the Renaissance. Perhaps we

are not so ready to expect absolute genius to-day ; but we are rigorous in demanding trustworthy facts.

Now in studying such a drawing as Mr. Brewer's London in the reign of Henry VIII., we feel that the unseen parts are as real and true to fact as those in full view. After many years' knowledge of these delightful plates, the first surprise is still re-awakened with every fresh study, and the discovery that these drawings suggest in some dexterous way the whole solid group of buildings, and not merely a succession of art scenes, comes again and again with renewed force. If you unfold and sit down to deliberately inspect one of Mr. Brewer's pictures of Old London, or Old Paris, you feel that it is a true bird's-eye view such as no photograph of a real town to-day could supply. For therein by optical necessity it would seem to consist mostly of roofs and chimneys. In these, by means of a plausible geometrical convention, you follow the streets, go under archways into quadrangles, realise the view which would meet the eye from any given window in the mass of houses, and in short, roam at will in this city as if Andersen's goloshes of happiness had taken your steps back two centuries or more.

The ancient cities renew their youth once more, and one feels after studying his pictures that one has surely crossed old London Bridge ; loitered on the quays of Paris when the first François reigned, or been a pilgrim to the basilica of old St. Peter's, Rome.

If Mr. Brewer wished to rebuild on paper a palace long since demolished it would be open to him to imagine a building more or less faithful to the contour of the site, and embodying certain well-known features ; but this is not his plan. He inspects the site, measures accurately all he remains, and studies old plans, if any exist, or such contemporary documents as deal with dimensions and statistics generally. He ransacks the libraries for chance views of the buildings, and compares them with the ascertained facts of the plan so far as it is known. Fact after fact reveals itself ; this drawing, deemed to be a most trustworthy view of the building, is found to be grossly inaccurate ; another, possibly a vignette at the corner of an ancient map, proves to be as true to its original as it could well be. So rejecting the unworthy, and patiently fitting together the haphazard mass of truths thus obtained, he completes the missing links by reference to other buildings designed by contemporary architects, or else supplies, as a trained antiquarian can supply, the development of the lost portions from those that remain.

No doubt Mr. Brewer allows himself some license that he would not take were a veritable rebuilding consequent upon his plans. If some conjectural feature might be restored in an exceedingly ornate and costly style, or in a meagre and comparatively economic one, doubtless his choice would not be the same as that of a building committee haunted by the vision of expenditure far beyond their income. So again, and this is apparent to a non-professional critic,

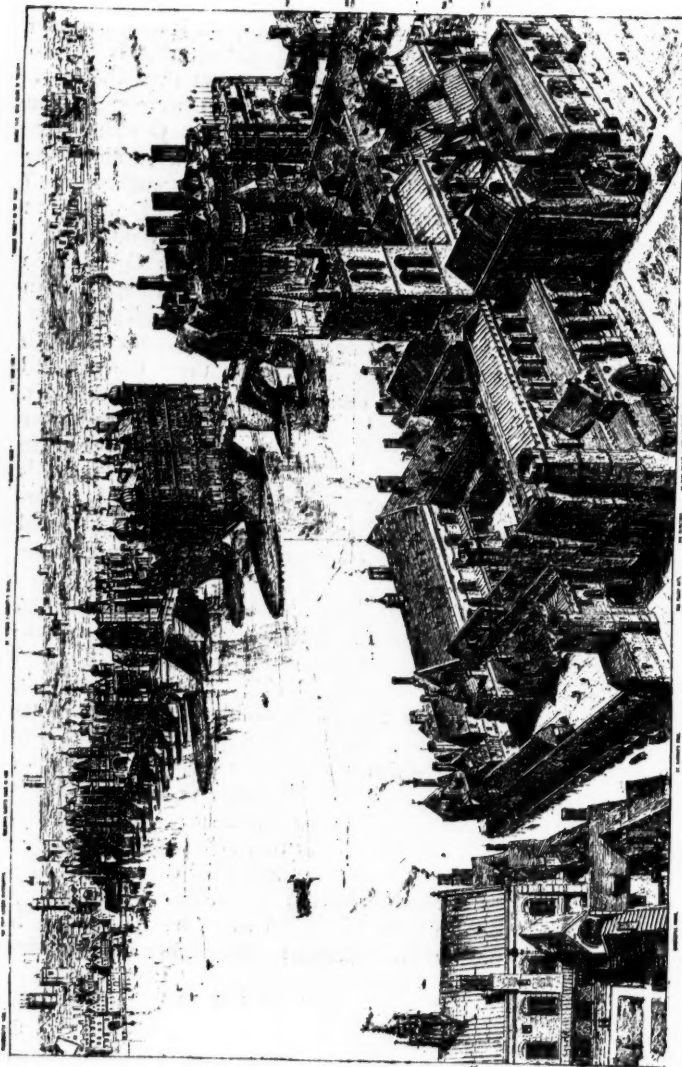
in his introduction of living figures, the proportions of walls presumably breast high (those of old London Bridge for instance) he deliberately reduces their scale to give majesty to his buildings. Again, the convention of perspective he has adopted is arbitrary, and the dignity of size which he gives to buildings not so great, is but an instance of the glamour which every artist throws over the past. This is apparent in sober history no less than in romance. The splendour is told you by the old chroniclers, not always with a view to its effect, not in dull Chancellor-of-the-Exchequer-fashion; the squalid misery of old times is barely hinted at, or if brought forward as a foil to the glory of the period, it is probably exaggerated, that its sombre shadow may throw the high lights into more vivid relief.

The sum total of the elaborate pains coupled with this slight license is to impress the spectator with a feeling of solidity and huge size, in a way that is almost entirely the secret of Mr. Brewer. True, some of Piranesi's famous engravings of architecture have presented this particular quality, but not in the same way; in these the pictorial effect has been the one for which the artist sacrificed all else. Mr. Brewer seems in no way concerned with the pictorial, hardly with the decorative quality of his panel. With one or two exceptions, these delightful drawings are not specially suited for framing. That this is because the artist worked for other ends no one can doubt; elsewhere, in water-colour especially, he has proved his power to build up fine pictures, splendid masses of colour that are admirable as the decoration of a framed panel.

To write archæologically and historically around and about, say, London Bridge about the year 1600, is a temptation well-nigh irresistible.

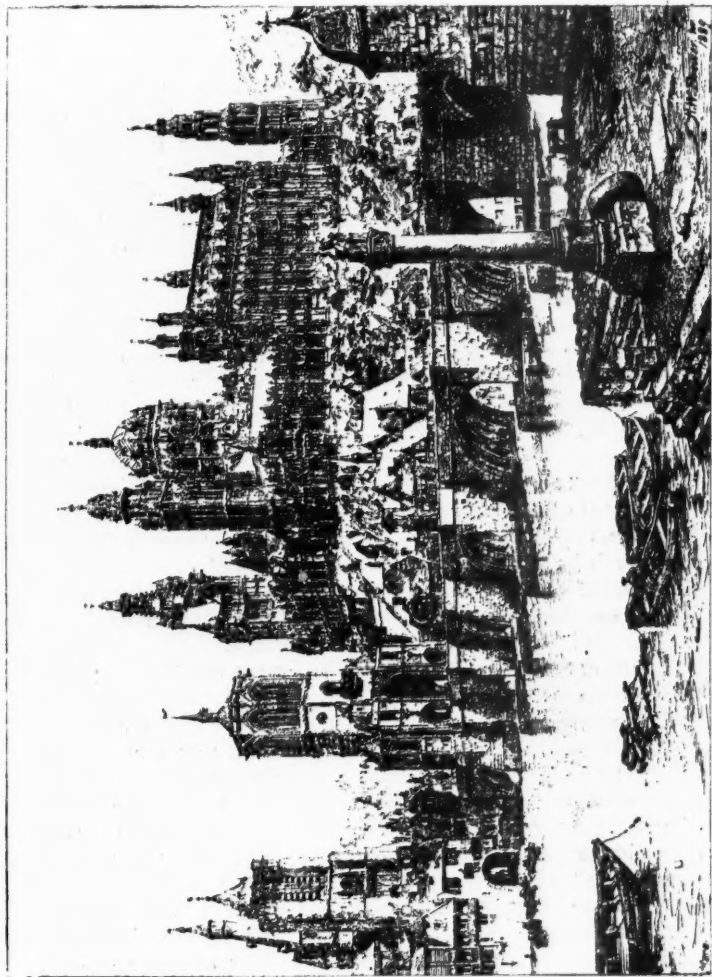
The subject recalls more picturesque incident to the square inch, than a given mile of ordinary topographical illustration. St. Mary Overie, otherwise St. Saviour's, Southwark, with its legend of the founder of the first bridge which spanned the Thames, Winchester House, the Pillory, London Bridge Gate bristling with traitors' heads on pikes, Nonsuch Palace, the old Draw Lock, with modern divagations to the bascules of the Tower Bridge, how they all teem with good subjects. The very river itself with its impetuous swirl of waters, and its huge fall through the narrow arches, not to mention the famous pageants which have passed beneath these arches (let us hope at flood tide), is it not hard to be so near this fruitful source of anecdote and incident and remain silent?

But to me, the charm of Mr. Brewer's work is, that it suggests all the story which gathers round the famous buildings in too clear a way to need enforcing. If you do not feel after a quiet prolonged search over the mass of pleasantly disposed lines, that half-forgotten legends revive, that the kings and saints, patriots and traitors, who once moved around them, are more real than ever, it is not, I think, the artist's fault.



LONDON BRIDGE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS ABOUT THE YEAR 1600
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY

As I pause to turn over once more the portfolio of the drawings, and to choose which shall be presented as evidence of what I have said, the stern logic of dimension that always refuses to allow a quart



"THE PALACE." (From the Third Book of "The House of Fame," by Chaucer.)

of liquid to be put in a pint measure becomes a most insistent and unpleasant fact. What hope is there that a drawing twelve inches wide can be reduced to four inches and yet keep its effect, and when, as in the case of *Old Paris under François II.*, the original is nearly

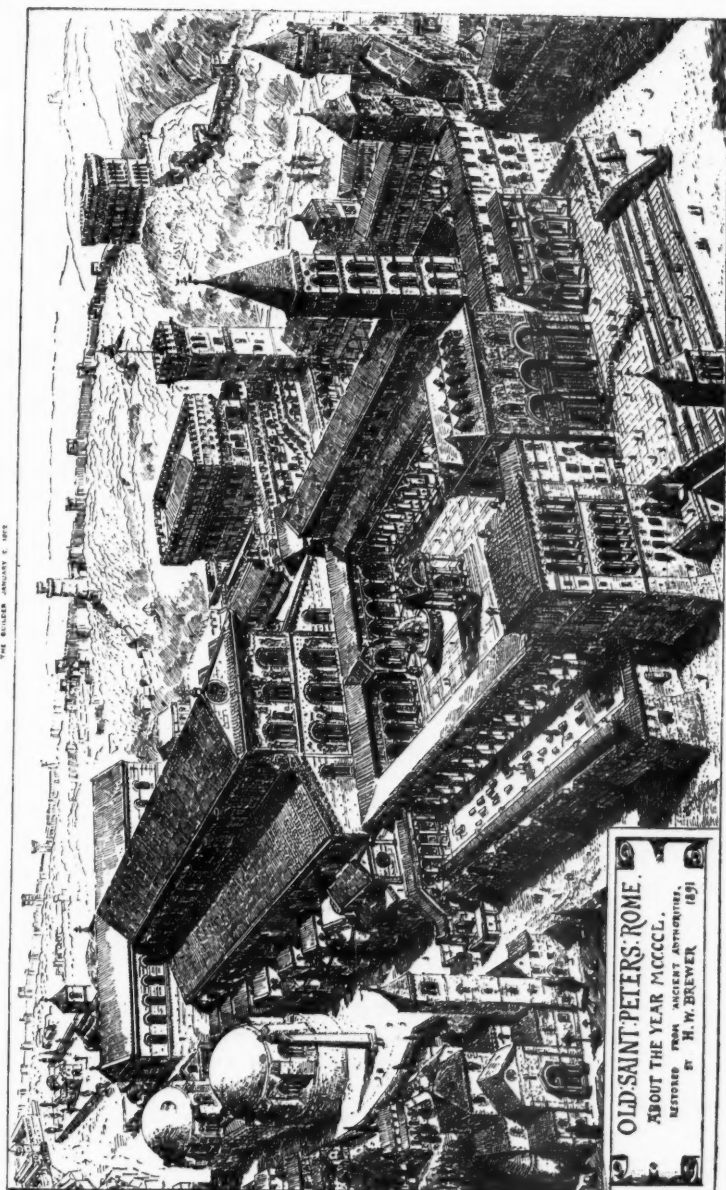
four feet wide, even one-twelfth of its beauty cannot be preserved in that enormous reduction.

Of the subjects which Mr. Brewer has published in *The Builder*, I may indeed give a selected list, beginning with those from the land of dreams—"Church and State," "On No Man's Land," "The Palace," "Gorgeousness," "The Renaissance," "Measure and Value," "Deserted," "The Water Gate," "The Two Bridges," yet the names suggest nothing to one unfamiliar with the originals. Of revivals of old buildings, among those which first come to mind, are *The Tower, Westminster time of Henry VIII., London Bridge 1600, Paul's Walk, The Choir Aisle, the New Work*, all three from old St. Paul's; Newgate; the high altar of Westminster; and Paris, time of François I.

Brief mention must suffice of a curious *tour de force* which does not otherwise appeal to me personally. This is a huge plate (46 inches by 23) issued with the famous jubilee number of *The Builder*, in which composition all the more important buildings of Queen Victoria's reign are brought side by side. That such a feat could ever be accomplished sounds impossible; Mr. Brewer conquered its difficulties; yet will he forgive me if I still confess to a secret wish that it had remained an impossible feat. Another huge plate issued by the *Graphic*, if memory can be trusted, shows us modern London from a balloon. This was cut on wood, and embodied certain atmospheric effects Mr. Brewer has elsewhere ignored. It is a noble effort, yet it lacks the unique interest which characterises his lithographs.

But let it not be thought that this artist works only in dreamland. His studies of Mechlin spire, of Calcar and other German churches—a monograph on *Some churches in the neighbourhood of Cleves*, would alone suffice to show, that as a reporter of contemporary facts, Mr. Brewer can impress you no less than in his recaptured scenes of old time, or his impressions in châteaux d'Espagne.

To thank the editor of the *Builder* for his courtesy in permitting these drawings to be reproduced, is as pleasant as it is obligatory; but at the same time, albeit the moral enforced may seem a little apart from this paper, one cannot help regretting that the gratitude of mankind for common mercies is so grudgingly expressed. For fourpence, each one of these excellent lithographs was sold in thousands of copies. A few years ago a sovereign had been deemed little enough for an impression of such a plate, and then possibly the appreciation awarded had been more general. Now, save a few wise people who have treasured them, the fate which destroys the bulk of our periodical literature has befallen, one may safely conjecture, the majority of these really memorable efforts. The poorest etching keeps a sort of fetish attached to it, which the populace outwardly respect, but a fine lithograph of a hundred times its intrinsic excellence, is ignored because it is just a picture in a weekly paper, and not tricked out with the adventitious pomp the print-seller so liberally bestows on his publications.



OLD SAINT PETERS, ROME.
ABOUT THE YEAR MCCCCL.
RESTORED FROM ANCIENT AUTHORITIES,
BY H. W. BREWER 1891

And now compare the popularity of these lithographs by Mr. Brewer with that gained by a second-rate painting at the Royal Academy, and noting the difference, forgive, if you can, the note of this paper, forced and rhapsodical though it may sound. It has been so phrased because undue indifference requires a clarion appeal to arouse its attention. No one, as I can vouch, will be less pleased with this indiscreet effort to record the admiration of a disciple, than Mr. Brewer himself, but when so many penny trumpets blow to summon worshippers to the shrines of little tin-gods-upon-wheels, it is with a savage delight that one gives blasts—discordant possibly, and not by any means with the restrained dignity which a contemporary critic should employ, to call upon lovers of art and architecture, to look again upon work seen often before. The blue sky, the gas-lit Thames at twilight are ignored daily, or accepted as commonplace items in the scheme of events, so these supplements of a weekly journal are glanced at and forgotten. Yet they are no common products, but really sufficiently individual to arouse enthusiasm even in an age teeming with illustrations and well-nigh overdone with pictures in black and white.



W I N T E R.

WE did not fear them once : the dull grey mornings
 No cheerless burden on our spirits laid ;
 The long night-watches did not bring us warnings
 That we were tenants of a house decayed.
 The early snows like dreams to us descended,
 The frost did fairy work on pane and bough ;
 Beauty and power and wonder have not ended—
 How is it that we fear the winters now ?

Alas ! my friend, the winter is within us ;
 Hard is the ice that grows about the heart ;
 Though worldly cares and vain regrets have won us
 To life's true heritage and better part.
 Seasons and skies rejoice—yea, worship rather,
 Whilst others toil and tremble even as we,
 Hoping for harvests they will never gather,
 Fearing the winters which they may not see.

UNDER A SPELL.

BY M. E. STANLEY-PENN.

I.

"HALLO, Phil, old fellow, what's this I hear? Is it true that you are going to commit matrimony?"

The person I addressed, and whose attention I had attracted by a smart tap on the shoulder, turned with a start, then laughed and shook hands.

He was as handsome a young fellow as you would meet in a summer's day; "fair-haired, blue-eyed, of aspect blithe," with a sunny smile, and a manner which even men pronounced charming, and women, irresistible.

"Perfectly true," he acknowledged. "You can congratulate or condole with me, as you feel inclined."

"I shall wait first to hear who is the lady," I answered cautiously, as I linked my arm in his. We were walking down the "sweet shady side of Pall-Mall" one bright spring afternoon four years ago. "Is it that fascinating Russian Countess whom you used to rave about last season till I was sick of her name?"

"No, it is not Madame Marenski," Philip Durham answered, colouring slightly.

"So much the better. Who is it then? Do I know her?"

"No, I don't think you have ever met. It is Miss Rayne."

"What! the American heiress? The match of the season? Phew! upon my word, for an impecunious younger son you have not done badly. But I thought you told me she was the sort of girl you particularly detested, self-assertive, and under-bred?"

"When I said that I did not know her, and had an entirely wrong impression about her; I found out my mistake later. She is not an American, by-the-bye; her father was English; a man of good family, but considered rather a ne'er-do-weel, till he redeemed his character by making a big fortune, silver-mining in Nevada. When his death two years ago left her an orphan, Dolores (she was named after her mother, who was a Spaniard) came to England to live with an aunt——"

"Dolores?" I interrupted, with sudden interest; "Dolores Rayne? Why, I knew her when she was a child. I made her father's acquaintance years ago, when I was travelling in the States—a capital fellow, and his wife the handsomest woman I ever saw; though, unless I am mistaken, she had a temper. Miss Dolly and I were great chums. She was then a little black-eyed witch of ten, with a warm heart, a saucy tongue, and a finely developed will of her own."

He laughed. "She still possesses all those characteristics, par-

ticularly the latter. But she is a glorious creature, Hetley!" he added, enthusiastically. "Such a face and figure! and such a warm, generous, affectionate nature! It is impossible not to love her, in spite of her faults! But it must be acknowledged," he added pensively, "that Dolores, like her mother, 'has a temper.'"

"And how did Madame Marenski take the news of your engagement?"

He stroked his moustache thoughtfully. "Well, she took it quietly," he said, after a pause; "very quietly; though of course it was a surprise to her, as she knew of my prejudice against Dolores, and in fact had rather fostered it. To say the truth I quite expected there would be a scene, because—well I'm afraid I had given her reason to believe that if I married anyone it would be herself."

"H'm! It sounds, do you know, as if you had treated her rather shabbily."

"I know I did, and I feel awfully ashamed of myself," he confessed penitently; "but what could I do? I honestly believed that I was deeply in love with her till I met Dolores, and found out for the first time what real love is. To have married her after that would have been to make us both miserable. And besides, brilliant and fascinating as she is——"

He checked himself and left the sentence unfinished.

"However, I must say that she behaved beautifully," he continued: "uttered not a word of reproach, hoped our 'pleasant friendship,' would still continue, and went out of her way to cultivate my *fiancée*. Dolores, who is rather given to striking up sudden friendships, was quite captivated by her, and is staying at her house at the present time. I was just on my way to call. I haven't seen her for a week, having been down in Norfolk, in the bosom of my family. Come with me, won't you? It's Madame's day, and you will meet some amusing people."

"But I don't know her. I have heard her discussed often enough, but never saw her, to my knowledge."

"That doesn't matter; you will be welcome as my friend. Besides, you have travelled, and are literary and all that—just the sort of fellow she likes. Come along; we must take a cab," he added, "she lives in the wilds of Kensington."

The house which the Countess Marenski occupied was a large old-fashioned one of red brick, standing back from the road in a walled garden. We were ushered into a spacious drawing-room, somewhat over-crowded with pictures and ornaments, and with decidedly more colour in its scheme of decoration than is permitted by the modern code of æsthetics.

It was thronged with visitors of both sexes, and an animated buzz of conversation prevailed, above which rose the wild, sweet notes of a violin, played by someone in an inner room, which was divided from the first by a curtained archway.

"The usual menagerie," Philip remarked, disrespectfully, glancing round at the visitors who, to say truth, were a sufficiently heterogeneous assemblage. "Can't imagine where she picks up such impossible people. There's Goring, the actor; the pretty untidy woman he is talking to is Miss —, who writes doubtful novels. The tall man with the wild head of hair is Professor Platz of the Psychological Society—avoid him; he is a deadly bore; and the weird old woman in black, who looks like the Witch of Endor, is Mrs. Amelia G. Scraggs, the American clairvoyante. The Countess goes in for that sort of thing, you know, and is by way of being a 'medium' herself."

"Who is it that is playing the violin so beautifully?"

"Madame herself. She is an accomplished musician, and an artist as well—paints and models to perfection. In fact there are very few things she can't do."

"Has she ever been on the stage?"

"Not that I know of; I should think it unlikely. Her husband, Count Marenski, was a great swell, I believe, but her married life was anything but happy—at least, so I gather from hints she has dropped, for she hates to speak of the past. He had left her, and they were living apart when he died—— Hush, here she comes," he broke off as the music suddenly ceased, and our hostess's figure appeared in the doorway.

She was a tall, slight, blonde woman, whose age it was difficult to determine, with a graceful, undulating figure, and a face which at first sight charmed and dazzled, but on closer study revealed something vaguely repellent. There was a slumbering fire in those soft, sleepy grey eyes of hers, half-veiled by their long lashes, and a hardness in the lines of mouth and chin, which, unless I was much mistaken, betrayed not only strong passions but a cruel and relentless nature. A woman whose love might be dangerous, and whose hatred would be deadly, I thought, as I watched her. Assuredly not a safe woman to offend. But what puzzled me was that her face seemed strangely familiar, though I could not for the life of me recall where and when I had seen it before. I was presented by Philip in due form, and received with a gracious smile.

"Any friend of Mr. Durham's is welcome," she said, in a soft liquid voice to which her slight foreign accent gave an added charm; "but particularly such a distinguished litterateur as the author of 'Modern Russia.' Your description of Russian society is wonderfully accurate, Mr. Hetley. You must have lived for some time in my country?"

"Yes, I know it very well—particularly St. Petersburg."

"How long is it since you were there?" she asked; and I fancied she waited rather anxiously for my answer.

"About six years."

"Ah, that was before—before the great sorrow of my life came upon me," she said with a sigh, and a sudden droop of her white eyelids.

"What changes since then, alas! But it will not do to think of it." Then, turning to Philip, she continued: "You are looking for Dolores? She is not very well to-day—oh, nothing serious; only a headache—and has been lying down, but she promised to come down presently and sing to us. Ah, here she is," she added, as the door opened and Miss Rayne appeared.

I saw at once that Philip's description of her was no mere lover's hyperbole. She was indeed a "glorious creature." Tall and straight as a dart, with a rich southern complexion, velvet dark eyes, which could flash with anger or sparkle in mirth, and a sweet "mutinous" mouth which told of a generous, though wilful and impulsive nature.

But just now the girl was very pale, and there was a curious look of repressed excitement about her. Philip went forward to meet her eagerly, his handsome face beaming with pleasure. To my surprise, she either did not, or would not see his outstretched hand, and turned to her hostess, pointedly ignoring him.

"Thanks, my head is much better," she said, in answer to the former's inquiries. "Oh, yes, I feel quite able to sing," and she was passing by when I ventured to detain her.

"Miss Rayne, will you allow me to recall myself to your recollection?" I said, perceiving that Philip was too dumfounded by his reception to think of introducing me.

She looked at me with a puzzled expression, which gave place the next moment to a bright smile of recognition.

"Of course—it is Mr. Hetley!" she exclaimed, impulsively putting out both hands. "How delightful to meet you again! It reminds me of the dear old times. But fancy your remembering me after all these years!"

"That is not so remarkable as that you should remember me," I observed.

"You impressed yourself on my memory by your kindness," she said pleasantly. "We will have a long talk directly—but now my audience is waiting;" and with another of her winning smiles, she turned away.

"Dolores!" Philip exclaimed, laying his hand on her arm.

The girl drew back haughtily, looked him full in the face, and passed on without a word or sign of recognition. He started as if she had struck him, and the colour rushed to his face as he stood looking after her in blank amazement.

"What does that mean?" I asked in an undertone.

"I know no more than you do," he declared. "We parted on perfectly good terms a week ago, and now she cuts me dead. She must explain herself. I am not going to be treated in this way."

He was starting off to follow her, but I checked him.

"Don't make a scene. She is going to sing; wait till she has finished, and then speak to her quietly. No doubt it is only some trifling misunderstanding."

He acquiesced half reluctantly, and retreated to the further end of the room, where he was promptly seized upon and button-holed by Professor Platz, who had been prowling about in search of a fresh listener.

Meantime Miss Rayne had taken her seat at the piano, and the first notes of her voice—a rich full contralto—caused a sudden hush in the murmur of conversation. She had chosen the “Song of Hypolito,” from the “Spanish Student,” and seemed to throw her whole soul into the words—

“Ah, Love !
Perjured, false, treacherous Love !”

There was a ring of passionate scorn in her voice that thrilled the listeners.

“Thorns below and flowers above—
Perjured, false, treacherous Love !”

But at the end of the first verse she broke off abruptly, saying that she was not in voice to-day, and in spite of a chorus of remonstrance and entreaty, rose abruptly from the piano. As she did so, she glanced towards me, and, with a pretty imperious gesture, which reminded me forcibly of the saucy “Dolly” of old, beckoned me to her side.

“Let us go into the other room,” she said, “it is quieter there.” And she led the way through the curtained arch, leaving Philip still writhing impatiently in the Professor’s grasp.

The room was furnished as a studio, and gave evidence of its owner’s versatile tastes. On an easel stood an unfinished picture ; in a glass case was a group of fruit and flowers exquisitely modelled in wax ; and a pedestal at the further end supported a marble bust, covered by a cloth.

“There is no one here, thank goodness !” Dolores said, in a tone of relief. “How those people chatter !”

“Have you acquired a distaste for society ?” I asked, smiling ; “or are you only a little ‘out of tune’ to-day ?”

“I am out of tune,” she returned. “I feel as if I had been stroked the wrong way, and should like to scratch someone.”

I laughed.

“What shall I do to soothe your ruffled feelings ? I fear you have outgrown bonbons, which in the old days used to be infallible.”

“I have outgrown many things since then,” she answered, moodily — “a few beliefs and illusions among the rest.”

I looked at her a moment in silence, wondering what made the beautiful face so dark and overcast.

“May I venture to congratulate you on your engagement ?” I said,

at length. "Philip Durham is an old friend of mine, and an excellent fellow. You——"

She stopped me by a look.

"My engagement to Mr. Durham is at an end," she said coldly.

"What!" I exclaimed. "Why, it is barely half-an-hour since I heard of it from his own lips."

"He did not know, then, what I am waiting now to tell him—that I would not marry him if he were the last man left in the world," she replied deliberately.

"But what has Philip done to deserve this?" I questioned. "It is a delicate matter to interfere in lovers' quarrels; but if this is only some misunderstanding which a few words from a mutual friend would clear away——"

"There has been no quarrel, there is no misunderstanding," she interrupted. "It is simply this. Within the last few days a fact has come to my knowledge—I can't tell you what it is without compromising another person—which has enlightened me as to his true character, and killed my love and confidence at one blow."

"Ah, I think I understand! You have discovered, perhaps, that he had once a flirtation with Madame Marenski? But my dear child——"

"Oh, I knew that long ago!" she returned. "I am not so foolish as to indulge in retrospective jealousy. But what I did not know and cannot forgive, is that he——"

She was interrupted by the entrance of Philip himself. "Dolores, what on earth is the matter?" he began. "What have I done to offend you?"

The girl's face grew set and hard. She rose, drawing a ring from her finger. "I wish to be released from my engagement," she said, with cold distinctness. "Here is your ring."

He stared at her in consternation. "For what reason?" he demanded. "What has happened?"

"Nothing has happened. I have merely come to the conclusion that we are not suited to each other. You see"—with a hard little laugh which was half a sob—"I am romantic enough to wish to be loved a little for myself as well as for my money, and I fear there is not room in your heart for both."

The young man coloured and bit his lip to keep down his anger.

"That is a cruel insinuation," he cried indignantly, "and one which you must know to be untrue. I should never have asked you to be my wife if I had not loved you with an affection as deep and sincere as ever man felt."

"Pray spare me any further protestations," she returned. "I have learned to know exactly what they are worth."

"You trusted me once. Who has taught you to doubt me?" was his question.

She made no reply.

"Dolores," her lover said earnestly, "I implore you not to let some foolish and cruel slander ruin the happiness of both our lives. If ever you loved me——"

The girl turned upon him suddenly with flashing eyes. "If ever I loved you!" she echoed. "Yes, I loved you passionately, and trusted you utterly; but now I know you, it humiliates me to think I could ever have cared for one so mean and false."

As she spoke the last words unconsciously raising her voice, Madame Marenski entered the room. She seemed to take in the situation at a glance, and for a second, a look of something very like malicious triumph crossed her face. But it passed as quickly as a breath from a mirror, giving place to one of surprise and concern. "Dolores," she said, in a tone of tender remonstrance, laying her hand on the girl's shoulder, and looking earnestly into the flushed excited face.

Her touch seemed to possess some quality of magnetic control. Dolores' agitation subsided as if by magic. She shivered slightly and turned pale, but said nothing.

"What has happened to excite her so painfully?" the Russian asked, addressing Philip, without removing her hand from her friend's shoulder. "Surely you have not quarrelled?"

"The quarrel was not of my making," he answered coldly. "Miss Rayne insists on breaking off our engagement, but refuses to tell me her motives. It is evident that someone has poisoned her mind against me during my absence."

He glanced keenly at his hostess as he spoke, as if with a half-formed suspicion; but she met his eyes without flinching.

"Surely no one would be so base!" she exclaimed. "And what accusation could possibly be brought against you, who are the soul of honour, truth, and—constancy?"

Again Philip looked at her, doubting whether her words were spoken in earnest or in bitterest irony. But her face told nothing.

"Leave her to me," she continued, in an undertone; "she is nervous and unstrung to-day. Dear," she continued, in her soft, caressing voice, addressing Dolores, who stood passive and motionless with downcast eyes; "your head is worse, I am sure; you look so white and tired. You must lie down again and try to sleep. Come!"

She took her hand as she spoke. Dolores hesitated a moment, and then, in the same curiously passive way, and without another glance at Philip or myself, allowed herself to be led from the room.

"Let us go," Durham said hurriedly, when they had disappeared; "the air of this house suffocates me. Come and dine with me, will you, Hetley? It will be a charity."

I assented, and we left the house together.

II.

"DEPEND upon it, Phil, your fair friend the Countess is at the bottom of this," I said, when, dinner being over, and the servant dismissed, we were sitting over our coffee and cigars in Durham's snug rooms in Jermyn Street. "There is no one who has an interest in robbing you of Dolores' love except the woman whom you deserted for her sake."

He changed his position uneasily. "I can't believe Olga Marenski capable of so mean a revenge."

"'Hell holds no fury like a woman scorned,'" I quoted. "If you think she has forgiven you, you are no judge of physiognomy."

He stared moodily at the fire a moment, then started up and began to pace the room. "But, good heavens, if this is true, what an actress—what a hypocrite she must be!" he exclaimed at length. "To play the comedy of friendship to us both, while all the time she was plotting to divide us—it is sickening! And she has evidently obtained such an influence over Dolores that the girl will believe any lies she chooses to tell her."

"And yet Dolores is not one to be easily duped," I remarked thoughtfully. "Doesn't it strike you that there is something rather strange, not to say mysterious, in the power this woman has obtained over her in so short a time?"

"It does not surprise me. The control she exercises over others by mere force of will is almost uncanny. I have felt it myself. There was a time when she could make me do and think what she chose and though——"

A subdued tap at the door interrupted him, and his discreet manservant, Watton, appeared with the information that "a person" wished to see him.

"A person?" Philip repeated. "Is it a tradesman?"

"No, sir; it is a—a lady."

"A lady! at this hour! Impossible! Did she give her name?"

"No, sir; but she—it is—it is Miss Rayne, sir."

"*What!*" Durham almost shouted, staring at him incredulously.

"Miss Rayne, sir," repeated the man, lowering his voice; "she came in a hansom, which is waiting, and has followed me upstairs——"

Even as he spoke, the door was pushed open, and the visitor appeared on the threshold.

She wore a long black mantle, and a small half-mourning bonnet, with a gauze veil, not so thick as to conceal her features; the fine arched brows, the delicately modelled nose, and the low broad forehead, with its fringe of loosely curling soft dark hair.

Her eyes were lowered, and she kept in the shadow near the door.

Philip turned towards her eagerly, with the same idea which had occurred to myself, namely, that she had repented her rash decision

of yesterday, and had impulsively come, in defiance of conventionalities, to "make it up." But another glance at her face dispelled this pleasing illusion. Stonily calm it was, but with a look of stern vindictive purpose which hardened every feature.

"Dolores"—her lover faltered, taking a step towards her. She drew back still further into the shadow, and without uttering a word, without even raising her eyes to his face, pointed to a small sandalwood box—her own gift to him—which stood on a side-table.

"You wish to have your letters?" he questioned, divining her meaning. She silently inclined her head in assent. There was something so strange, so unnatural in her manner, and in the almost death-like immobility of her face, that I watched her in alarm and perplexity, doubting if she were in her right mind; and I could see that Philip shared my fear. Mechanically he crossed the room, took up the box, and approached her again.

As he presented it to her, she suddenly drew out the hand which had hitherto been concealed within her cloak, and I saw something gleam in the lamplight. At the same moment Durham uttered a quick cry, and staggered back, his hand pressed to his side. Without another glance at him she hurried from the room, and brushing past Watson, who was lingering in the doorway, descended the stairs, and was out of the house before we had recovered from our stupefaction.

I started up to follow her, but Philip detained me.

"No, you must not," he gasped. "Let her go——"

"But, good heavens, she has stabbed you," I cried, as I supported him to a chair.

"It is nothing," he faltered, though he had turned deadly pale.

"Tell no one; say—it was an accident. If I die, let her know that I forgave her. Oh, Dolores——"

He gave a shuddering sigh, and fell back insensible.

"Shall I fetch Dr. Mackay, sir?" inquired Watson, hurriedly.

"He is the nearest surgeon."

I acquiesced with a nod, and he left the room.

Philip was still insensible when the doctor arrived—a grave, hard-featured, dry-mannered Scotsman, who listened without comment, but with evident incredulity, to my confused account of the accident. He declined at present to commit himself to an opinion as to the gravity of his patient's injury, but recommended that his parents should be sent for without delay; and I accordingly at once despatched a cautiously-worded telegram to his father. He passed a restless and feverish night, and when morning came, was in a condition which made Dr. Mackay look graver than ever.

Sir Henry, accompanied by Lady Durham, arrived about noon. Fearing to be questioned, I left the house without seeing them, and having paid a hasty visit to my chambers in order to change my dress took a cab and drove to Kensington.

I felt that I must see Dolores—force the unhappy girl to confide

in me, and save her, if possible, from the consequences of her crime. That she was not in her right senses when she committed it, I felt convinced. Hasty, head-strong, passionate, I knew her to be, but I could not believe her capable of such a deed, except on the supposition that her mind was for the time unhinged. I was still pondering over the mystery, when the cab drew up at Madame Marenski's door.

"Miss Rayne had not yet left her room," the servant told me, "but would be down in a few moments."

He ushered me into the drawing-room, which had no occupant but a great white macaw in a gilded cage, that screamed angrily at my intrusion, executing a sort of war-dance on its perch. To escape the bird's irritating noise, I passed into the studio, absently examining the casts and pictures and group of wax flowers. Then my attention was attracted by the bust. I removed the cloth which concealed it, and found that it was a portrait of Dolores, needing only a few finishing touches in the hair and drapery to complete it.

But this was not the bright debonnaire face I knew so well. The features were hers indeed, but they were disfigured by exactly the same dark vindictive expression she had worn last night—as if, like Coleridge's "Christabel," the girl were under some malignant spell, and forced to imitate "a look of dull and treacherous hate."

I was still contemplating it when Dolores entered. To my astonishment, though looking pale and depressed, she was perfectly composed, and greeted me as if nothing had happened.

"I hope you are not admiring that horrid thing," she said, glancing distastefully at the bust. "Madame Marenski has made me look as if I were plotting a murder. I am sorry to have kept you waiting," she continued. "I was very lazy this morning, though I went to bed at an unnaturally early hour last night."

I gazed at her in bewilderment. Was this dissimulation? If so, she was the most accomplished actress I had ever met.

"But you went out between nine and ten?" I said.

She looked surprised, and shook her head.

"Oh, no; I was sound asleep then—thanks to Madame. She gave me a composing draught, which sent me into a deep sleep, almost like a trance. I did not wake till nearly eleven o'clock this morning."

Her manner was natural and unembarrassed; her eyes met mine frankly. I felt convinced that the girl was speaking the truth, or what she believed to be the truth. And yet I had seen her with my own eyes in Philip's rooms at the moment when she declared herself to have been in bed.

What was I to believe? Was it possible that the deed had been committed in her sleep? Had she, while in that trance-like slumber, been made the unconscious instrument of another's revengeful will?

I recalled her strange fixed look and automatic manner, and the idea, extravagant as it seemed, gathered probability.

But would anyone else believe it? Suppose—the thought sent a chill through me—suppose she were tried for her life, would any jury accept such a theory in the face of the overwhelming evidence against her? No; I felt, with a shudder, that if Philip died, Dolores was lost.

While these thoughts passed rapidly through my mind, she had composedly seated herself, motioning me to do the same. It gave me a curious sensation to see her so calm and unmoved on the verge of such deadly peril.

"I am glad you have called, Mr. Hetley," she began. "I have something to say to you. I do not regret having broken off my engagement"—her lip quivered a little as she spoke—"but I feel that I ought to have explained my motives. I can do so now, for I am released from the promise of secrecy which kept me silent yesterday."

She took a packet of letters from her pocket as she spoke.

"These were written by—by Philip to Madame Marenski," she said, "and she showed them to me the other day, that I might know what manner of man it was that I was wasting my love upon."

"Very kind and disinterested of her. But did you not tell me that you were perfectly aware of his having flirted with her before he met you?"

"Yes; but I did not know that the flirtation was so serious, and that it continued long after his engagement to me—that while he was deluding me with the semblance of love, the reality was given to her—that he spoke of me with dislike and disparagement, and cynically acknowledged that, for him, my fortune was my only attraction."

"I will never believe Philip capable of such baseness!" I exclaimed.

She opened the packet, and hurriedly selected one letter, which she handed to me.

"You see that it is no forgery?"

"It is undoubtedly Philip's writing," I admitted.

"Read it. See how he writes to the woman he loves of the woman he is going to marry."

I glanced through the letter and uttered an exclamation.

"But this cannot have been written lately! It is utterly impossible he could speak of you in these terms when he had learned to know you!"

"Look at the date," she rejoined—"March of this year. We have been engaged since Christmas."

I rose and walked to the window, examining the letter more closely; and presently I made a curious discovery.

"Are you convinced?" Dolores asked at last.

"I am convinced," I said dryly, as I returned to her side, "that your friend the Countess is a very clever and ingenious lady. Now, supposing for a moment that these letters had been written before Philip knew you personally, should you resent them?"

"Of course not. I knew that he was prejudiced against me at first ; he has told me so ; and in these letters he says no more than that. But look at the date."

"Look again yourself," I retorted, "and you will see that the last figure in the date of the year has been altered. Not one of these letters was written since your engagement."

She started, and hurriedly examined them. I saw the colour rush to her face, then retreat, leaving it white.

"You are right," she said in an altered tone. "They have been tampered with. Ah, I see it all now ! This was a plot to separate us, and thanks to my wicked temper, it has succeeded. How could I have believed it ? Fool—fool that I have been ! I have insulted him past forgiveness—I have lost him ! Oh, Philip——"

Burying her head in a cushion of the couch, she burst into a passionate flood of tears, her sobs shaking her from head to foot. After a moment she looked up at me imploringly.

"Mr. Hetley," she said, in a choked, trembling voice ; "will you go to Philip—now, at once ? Beg him to come to me, and I will ask his forgiveness on my knees !"

"He cannot come to you," was my grave reply ; "he lies now dangerously ill ; wounded—perhaps mortally—by your hand."

"By—my—hand !" she echoed, gazing at me wonderingly.

I inclined my head in assent. "Last night, between nine and ten o'clock, a woman came to his rooms, and in the presence of witnesses, of whom I was one, deliberately stabbed him. That woman was yourself."

She sprang to her feet. "What are you saying ? What monstrous accusation is this ?" she cried. "You must know that it is false——"

"It is true," said a quiet voice behind us. Madame Marenski was standing in the curtained archway, regarding us with a curious smile. "I heard Miss Rayne tell you a few moments ago that she did not leave the house last night," she continued, in a tone of icy distinctness, addressing me. "Her memory plays her false. She went out after I myself had retired, and was absent more than an hour. The servants saw her, and this morning the housemaid brought me something she had dropped in the hall."

She showed me a quaint silver-handled dagger of Moorish workmanship.

"I little thought when I gave it her a few days ago that it would be used as an instrument of—revenge."

As she spoke the last word, for the first time she looked full at Dolores, with an expression of malignant triumph, which seemed to transform her into a fiend.

How strangely familiar her face seemed to me with that look upon it ! What was the association connected with it which I tried vainly to recall ? Suddenly—in a flash, as it were—I recollected ; and, at the same moment a flood of light poured in upon my mind.

The event of last night was no longer a mystery, and I knew that Dolores was innocent of any, even unconscious, participation in the deed.

As the girl was about to speak, I silenced her by a gesture, and advanced a step nearer to the mistress of the house.

"I think I have seen that dangerous plaything before," I remarked, taking it from her hand. "Was it not formerly in the possession of an actress of St. Petersburg, named Olive Merovna?" Had I had any doubt as to the correctness of my suspicion, the change in her face would have dispelled it.

"I do not know," she faltered; "I never heard of such a person."

"No! yet her name was sufficiently notorious some ten years ago. She was arrested, you may remember, on suspicion of having murdered her husband, but though there was strong presumptive evidence against her, she was acquitted, as she could not be identified with the woman who fired the fatal shot. Afterwards, when she had escaped the country, it was discovered that she was indeed the criminal, but had disguised herself in a way to defy detection—altering, not only her dress and figure, but, by an ingenious artifice, her very features——"

I paused a moment, looking at her steadily. "Was it not the same device which you employed last night, Madame?"

The Russian started, and I saw her cast a quick involuntary glance towards a Japanese cabinet near the fire-place. That glance was an unconscious revelation of something I had wished to know. In a moment I had crossed the room to where the cabinet stood, and had my hand on the door, when, with a cry of mingled rage and terror, she darted after me and seized my arm.

"What are you doing? are you mad?" she cried, unconsciously speaking in her own language.

"No, madame," I answered in the same tongue. "I am in full possession of my senses, and am merely curious to examine the contents of this cabinet. It is locked, I perceive. Oblige me with the key."

"If you dare to touch it I will call the servants and have you turned out of the house!" she gasped.

"Call them in, by all means; they will be valuable witnesses," I returned, coolly. "You refuse to unlock it? Very well," and with one vigorous blow I drove in the fragile doors.

She set her teeth, and tried with all her strength, which was not slight, to push me back; but it was too late. I had already caught sight of what I was in search of, lying, half hidden, on an upper shelf, and held it up triumphantly above her reach.

It was a delicate wax mask of Dolores' face, evidently modelled from the bust, and coloured to the life.

The girl, who had been a silent and bewildered spectator of the scene, uttered a startled cry, and involuntarily recoiled. "Ah—I

understand!" she exclaimed, in a tone of sudden enlightenment; "it was she who attempted Philip's life. While I was sleeping last night she dressed in my clothes, and with that mask on her face, went to his rooms! You dreadful woman," she added, turning to the Russian, who stood, white and panting, the image of baffled malice: "how had either of us injured you that you should plot our destruction?"

"How had you injured me? you dare to ask me that?" the other retorted, in a breathless tone of suppressed passion. "Was it nothing that Philip Durham made me love him as I had never loved before—madly, miserably, and after using me as the pastime of his leisure hours, flung me aside carelessly as an old glove when he met a fairer face? And you—was it nothing that you robbed me of him? that you maddened me by parading your affection for him under my own eyes, in my own house? He had loved me once or pretended to do so, and if you had never come between us I should now have been his wife."

Passion choked her voice. She made a sudden snatch at the mask, and would have trampled it under foot, had I not been too quick for her.

"No, no, madame," I said quietly; "I cannot allow you to destroy this valuable *pièce de conviction*. It will be wanted—later."

Her arm fell to her side. She looked at me steadily, her excitement giving place all at once to a cold composure.

"You intend to give me up to justice?" she questioned, in Russian, speaking with great distinctness and deliberation.

"Most assuredly I do," I answered, "and I shall take care that you do not escape this time. You will please to consider yourself a prisoner from this moment."

She drew a deep breath, still looking at me fixedly. The pupils of her strange grey-green eyes dilated, and her red lips slowly widened in a sinister smile.

"I am to consider myself a prisoner?" she repeated; "so be it. I am at your mercy. I yield to the inevitable. Have I your Excellency's permission to sit down for a moment?" she continued, with mock humility. "I feel somewhat faint——"

I turned aside to place a chair for her, and in that moment she seized her opportunity, and with a movement swift and noiseless as a cat's, darted across the room. She had gained the door, closed and locked it after her, and was gone, with a rush of flying feet down the corridor outside, before I had time even to realise her intention.

The hansom which had brought me was still waiting.

While I was hammering at the locked door, enraged at being foiled so easily, I heard wheels pass the window, and glanced out just in time to catch a brief glimpse of a white face with an evil smile of triumph on it, and a hand waved in mocking farewell. The next moment she had vanished.

* * * * *

Philip Durham did not die, though it was many weary weeks before he was pronounced out of danger. Dolores had insisted on helping his mother to nurse him, and there were no limits to the girl's devotion. It seemed as if she could not do enough to prove her love and penitence, and her manner was so softened and subdued that she was hardly to be recognised as the proud and wilful Dolores of old. Indeed, Philip was ungrateful enough to complain that she was getting almost too meek and submissive; but, as I told him consolingly, that was a fault which matrimony would probably correct.

Madame Marenski they never saw or heard of again. She had crossed their path like some brilliant baleful meteor, and vanished into outer darkness, leaving no trace behind.

AN ITALIAN GARDEN.

A TERRACED garden where the olives grow
Grey-green, unchanging in the changeless air;
Tall pine-trees and straight cypresses a-row,
And myrtle-bushes, flowering everywhere:
And on each ordered stone-bound terrace grows
The citron, with the orange and the rose.

Against the lowest terrace leap and lie
Diamonds and sapphires of the southern sea;
The liquid turquoise of the southern sky
Folds it in exquisite tranquillity.
Across the bay, against the perfect skies,
The silver summits of the mountains rise.

And here love hides, deep in the silent grove,
Enshrined in maiden hearts and maiden eyes:
The glowing garden whispers but of love,
Love stirs the sea, and love lights up the skies.
Here grow the orange-flowers and myrtles rare,
Fit for the garland maiden-brows shall wear.

E. NESBIT.

MR. CASTONEL.

BY THE LATE MRS. HENRY WOOD, AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

CHAPTER III.

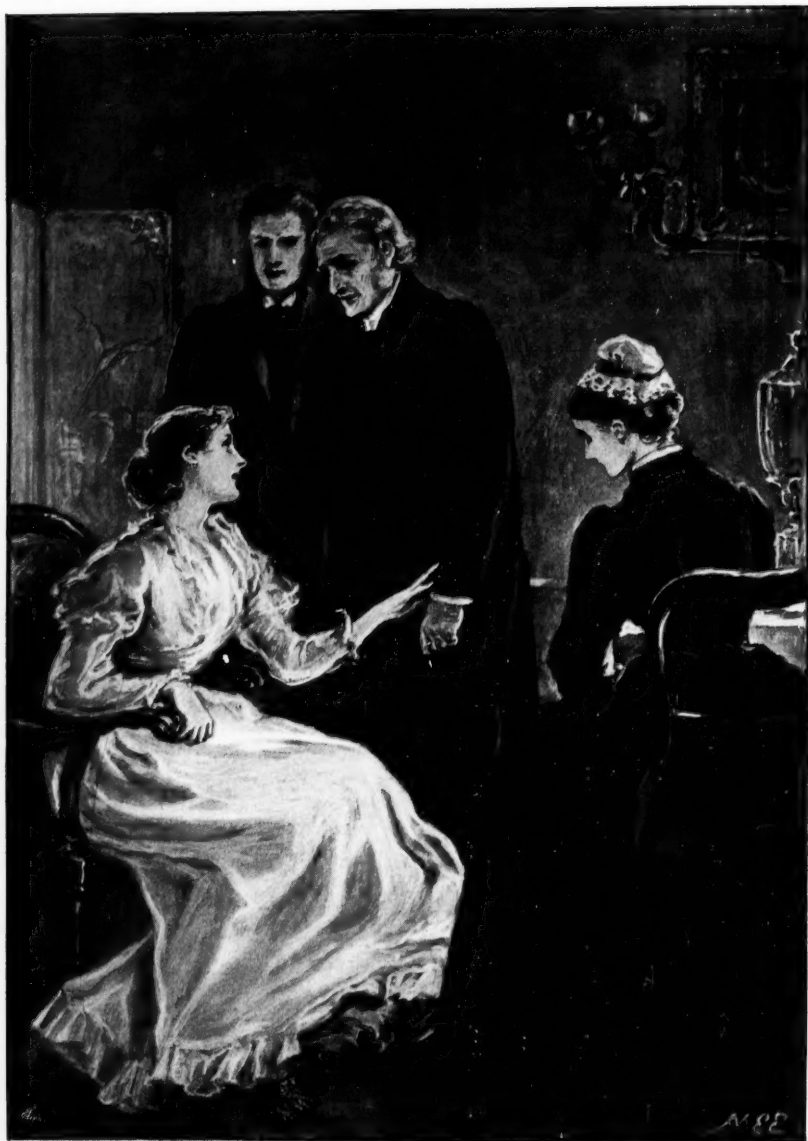
ELLEN LEICESTER.

THE hot day had nearly passed, and the sun, approaching its setting, threw the lengthening shade of the trees across the garden of Mrs. Chavasse. The large window of a pleasant room opened on to it; and in this room stood a fair, graceful girl, with one of the loveliest faces ever seen in Ebury. Her dark blue eyes were bent on the ground; as well they might be; the rose of her cheek had deepened to crimson; as well it might do; for a gentleman's arm had fondly encircled her waist, and his lips had pushed aside the cluster of soft hair, and were rendering that damask still deeper. Alas that her whole attitude, as she stood there, should tell of such rapturous happiness!

Neither was an inhabitant of that house; both had come in to pay an evening visit, and the young lady had thrown off her bonnet and mantle. It may be that these visits were accidental; but, if so, they took place nearly every evening. It happened that Mrs. and Miss Chavasse on this occasion were out, but were expected to enter every minute: so, being alone, they were improving the time.

And this from Miss Leicester, the carefully brought-up daughter of the Rector of Ebury! That she should repose quietly in the embrace of that man without attempting to withdraw from it! Yes; and *love* has caused many to do as much. But oh, that the deep, ardent affection, of which Ellen Leicester was so eminently capable, had been directed into any other channel than the one it had irrevocably entered upon!

For he who stood beside her was Gervase Castonel. It was not that he had once been married, but it was that there were some who deemed him a bad man, a mysterious man, with his sinister expression of face, when he did not care to check it, and his covert ways. Why should he have cast his coils round Ellen Leicester? why have striven to gain *her* love, when there were so many others whose welcome to him would have carried with it no alloy? It would almost seem that Mr. Castonel went by the rules of contrary, as the children say in their play. The only persons into whose houses he had not been received, and who had both taken so strange and unconquerable a dislike to him, were the late Mr. Winnington and the Reverend Christopher Leicester. Yet he had chosen his first wife in the niece



"WILL YOU NOT RETURN WHEN IT IS OVER?" RESUMED ELLEN ANXIOUSLY.



of the first, and it seemed likely (to us who are in the secret) that he was seeking a second in the daughter of the latter. Strange that he should have been able to do his work so effectually; that Ellen Leicester, so good and dutiful, should have been won over to a passion for him little short of infatuation, and that it should have been kept so secret from the whole world! Never was there a man who could go more mysteriously to work than Gervase Castonel.

"You speak of a second marriage, Ellen, my love," he was saying, "but how often have I told you that this scarcely applies to me. Were it that I had lived with her years of happiness, or that I had loved her, then your objections might have reason. I repeat to you, however much you may despise me for it, that I married her, caring only for you. Before I was awake to my own sensations, I had gone too far to retract; I had asked for her of old Winnington, and in honour I was obliged to keep to my hasty engagement. Even in our early marriage days, I knew that I loved but you: sleeping or waking, it was you who were present to me. Oh, Ellen! you may disbelieve and refuse to love me, but in mercy say it not."

There was honey in the words of Mr. Castonel, there was greater honey in his tones, and Ellen Leicester's heart beat more rapidly within her. *She* disbelieve aught asserted by him!

"Ellen, you judge wrongly," was his reply, as she whispered something in his ear. "It is a duty sometimes to leave father and mother."

"But not disobediently, not wilfully. And I know that they would never consent. You know it also, Gervase."

"My darling Ellen, this is nonsense. Suppose I were to yield to your scruples, and marry another in my anger? What then, Ellen?"

"I think it would kill me," she murmured.

"And because Mr. and Mrs. Leicester have taken an unjust prejudice against me, both our lives are to be rendered miserable! Would that be justice? Suppose you were my wife; do suppose it, only for a moment, Ellen; suppose that we were irrevocably united, we should then not have consent to ask, but forgiveness."

She looked earnestly at him, and as his true meaning came across her, the mild expression of her deep blue eyes gave place to terror.

"Oh, Gervase," she implored, clasping his arm in agitation, "never say that again! As you value my peace here and hereafter, do not tempt me to disobedience. I mistook your meaning, did I not?" she continued, in rapid tones of terror. "Gervase, I say, did I not mistake you?"

He felt that he had been too hasty: the right time had not come. But it would come: for never did Gervase Castonel set his will upon a thing that he left unfulfilled.

Miss Chavasse entered. Ellen Leicester was in the garden then: she had glided out on hearing her approach. And Mr. Castonel was seated back in an arm-chair, intent upon a newspaper.

"Oh," exclaimed Frances, "I am sorry we should have been out. I am sure we are obliged to you for waiting for us, Mr. Castonel."

"I have not waited long; but if I had waited the whole evening I should be amply repaid now." He spoke softly and impressively, as he detained her hand in his: and from his manner, then, it might well have been thought that he intended Frances Chavasse for his wife; at least, it never could have been believed that he was so ardently pursuing another.

"And Ellen Leicester is here!" added Frances; "for that's her bonnet. Have you seen her?"

"Who? Miss Leicester? Yes, I believe I did see her. But I was so engaged with this paper. Here is some interesting medical evidence in it."

"Is there?" But at that moment Ellen Leicester came to the window. "How long have you been here?" asked Frances.

"About an hour," was Miss Leicester's answer.

"What on awful girl for truth that is!" was the angry mental comment of Mr. Castonel.

"I must say you have proved yourselves sociable companions," remarked Frances. "You mope in the garden, Ellen, and Mr. Castonel bores over an old newspaper! Let us have a song."

Now Mr. Castonel hated singing, but Frances sat down to the piano, and he was pleased to stand behind her and clasp the hand of Ellen Leicester. Yet Frances, had she been asked, would have said Mr. Castonel's attention was given to herself; ay, and gloried in saying it, for she liked the man, and would have had no objection to becoming his second wife. It may be that she was scheming for it. Thus they remained until the night came on, and the moon was up. Frances, never tired of displaying her rich voice, and Ellen Leicester content to stand by his side, had the standing lasted for ever. Moonlight music and meetings are dangerous things.

A servant came for Ellen Leicester, and Mr. Castonel walked home with her. They went not the front way, but through the lane, which brought them to the back door of the rectory. Was it that Ellen shrank from going openly, lest her parents might see from the windows that Mr. Castonel was her companion? He lingered with her for a few moments at the gate, and when she entered she found her mother alone: the rector was out. To her it had been a delicious walk, and she felt that life would be indeed a blank, if not shared with Gervase Castonel.

Ellen had been invited to spend the next evening with Miss Chavasse, as was a frequent occurrence, and it was chiefly in these evening meetings that her love had grown up and ripened. Mr. Castonel was ever a welcome visitor to Mrs. Chavasse, and Frances had laughed, and talked, and flirted with him, until a warmer feeling had arisen in her heart. He had all the practice of Ebury, being its only resident medical man, so in a pecuniary point of view he was a

desirable match for Frances. Little deemed they that Ellen Leicester was his attraction. A tacit sort of rivalry with Ellen existed in the mind of Frances: she thought of her as a rival in beauty, a rival in position, a rival in the favour of Ebury. But she was really fond of Ellen, always anxious to have her by her side, and it never once entered into her brain that Mr. Castonel, who was under cold displeasure at the rectory, should seek the favour of Ellen.

Again went Ellen that evening to the house of Mrs. Chavasse, and again went Mr. Castonel. They, the three, passed it in the garden, a large rambling place, nearly as full of weeds as of flowers. They roamed about the different walks, they sat on the benches; Mr. Castonel's attention being given chiefly to Frances, not to Ellen, his custom when with both. Frances possessed her mother's old talent for flirtation, and Mr. Castonel was nothing loth to exercise it. And so, the evening passed, and the summer moon rose in its course.

"Oh!" suddenly cried Frances, as they were returning to the house, "I have forgotten the bay-leaves mamma told me to gather. Now I must go back all down to the end of the garden."

She probably thought Mr. Castonel would follow her. He did not do so. He turned to Ellen Leicester, and drawing her amongst the sheltering trees, clasped her to him.

"I shall wish you good-night now, my darling," he murmured, "this moment is too precious to be lost. Oh, Ellen! are things to go on like this for ever? It is true these evening meetings are a consolation to us, for they are spent in the presence of each other, but the hours which ought to be yours, and yours only, are thrown away in idle nonsense with Frances Chavasse. Oh, that we had indeed a right to be together and alone! When is that time to come?—*for come it must, Ellen.* When two people love as we do, and no justifiable impediment exists to its being legally ratified, that ratification will take place sooner or later. Think of this," he murmured, reluctantly releasing her, as the steps of Miss Chavasse were heard drawing near.

"I expected you were in the house by this time," she exclaimed breathlessly, "and you are only where I left you."

"We waited for you," said Mr. Castonel.

"Very considerate of you!" was the reply of Frances, spoken in a tone of pique. She *had* expected Mr. Castonel to follow her.

They walked on towards the house, Mr. Castonel giving his arm to Frances. Talking was heard in the drawing-room, and they recognised the voice of Mr. Leicester.

"I will go round here," said Mr. Castonel, indicating a path which led to a side gate. "If I enter, they will keep me talking; and I have a patient to see."

He extended a hand to each, as he spoke, by way of farewell, but Frances turned along the path with him. Ellen sat down on a garden-chair and waited. The voices from the house came distinctly to her ear in the quiet night.

"They will be in directly," Mrs. Chavasse was saying. "Mr. Castonel is with them. He and Frances grow greater friends than ever."

"Beware of that friendship," interrupted Mr. Leicester. "It may lead to something more."

"And what if it should?" asked Mrs. Chavasse.

The rector paused, as if in surprise. "Do I understand you rightly, Mrs. Chavasse—that you would suffer Frances to become his wife?"

"Who is going to marry Frances?" inquired Mr. Chavasse, entering, and hearing the last words.

"Nobody," answered his wife. "We were speculating on Mr. Castonel's attention to her becoming more pointed. I'm sure anyone might be proud to have him: he must be making a large income."

"My objection to Mr. Castonel is to his character," returned the clergyman. "He is a bad man, living an irregular life. The world may call it gallantry: I call it sin."

"You allude to that mysterious girl who followed him down here," said Mrs. Chavasse. "You know what he told Mr. Winnington—that it was a relation, a lady of family and character. Of course it is singular, her living on, here, in the way she does, but it may be quite right, for all that."

"I saw him stealing off there last night, as I came home," observed the rector. "But I do not allude only to that. There are other things I could tell you of: some that happened during the lifetime of his wife."

"Then I tell you what," interrupted Mr. Chavasse, in his bluff, hearty manner, "a man of that sort should never have a daughter of mine. So mind what you and Frances are about, Mrs. Chavasse."

"That's just like papa," whispered Frances, who had returned to Ellen Leicester. "Speaking fiercely one minute, eating his words he next. Mamma always turns him round her little finger."

"As you value your daughter's happiness, keep her from Mr. Castonel," resumed the minister. "I doubt him in more ways than one."

"Do listen to your papa, Ellen," again whispered Frances. "How prejudiced he is against Mr. Castonel."

"My dear father is prejudiced against him," was Ellen's thought. "He says he met him stealing off to her house last night—if he only knew that he was stealing back from taking me home!"

Ellen was mistaken. It was later in the evening that the rector had met Mr. Castonel.

"Must I give him up!" she went on, in mental anguish. "It will cost me the greatest of all earthly misery: perhaps even my life. But I cannot have the curse of disobedience on my soul. I must, I *will* give him up."

Ah, Ellen Leicester ! you little know how such good resolutions fail when *one* is present with you to combat them ! However, cherish your intention for the present, if you will. It will come to the same in the end.

"Ellen," Frances continued to whisper, "what is it that prejudices your papa against Mr. Castonel? Caroline told me herself, after her marriage, that that person was a relative of his, one almost like a sister. You heard her say so."

Ellen Leicester did not answer, and Frances turned towards her. It may have been the effect of the moonlight, but her face looked cold and white as the snow in winter.

It was a fine evening in October. Mr. Castonel had dined, and the tiger lighted the lamp, and placed it, with the port wine, on the table before him. Mr. Castonel was particularly fond of a glass of good port ; but he let it remain untouched on this day, for he was buried in thought. He was a slight-made man, neither handsome nor plain, and his unfathomable grey eyes never looked you in the face. He rang the bell, and the tiger answered it.

"Send Mrs. Muff to me. And, John, don't leave the house. I shall want you."

The housekeeper came in, closed the door, and came towards him. He was then pouring out his first glass of wine.

"Muff," he began, "there's a small, black portmanteau somewhere about the house. A hand-portmanteau."

"Yes, sir. It is in the closet by John's room."

"Get it out, and put a week's change of linen into it. Did the tailor send home some new clothes to-day?"

"He did, sir, and I ordered Hannah to take them up-stairs."

"They must be put in. And my shaving-tackle, and such things. I am going out for a few days."

Mrs. Muff was thunderstruck. She had never known Mr. Castonel to leave Ebury since he had settled in it, excepting on the occasion of his marriage.

"You have given me a surprise, sir," she said, "but I'll see to the things. Do you want them for to-morrow?"

"For this evening."

Mrs. Muff thought her ears must have deceived her. The last coach for the distant railway station had left. Besides, she had heard Mr. Castonel make an appointment in Ebury for the following day at twelve. "*This* evening, sir!" she repeated. "The coaches have all gone. The last drove by as John was bringing out the dinner-tray."

"For this evening," repeated Mr. Castonel, without further comment. "In half an hour's time. And, Muff, you must get the house cleaned and put thoroughly in order whilst I am away. Let the dressing-room adjoining my bed-chamber be made ready for use, the scent-

bottles and trumpery put on the dressing-table, as it was in—in the time of Mrs. Castonel."

This was the climax. Mrs. Muff's speech failed her.

"This is Tuesday. I intend to be home on Monday next. I shall probably bring a—a person—a companion home with me."

"A what, sir?" demanded Mrs. Muff.

"A friend will accompany me, I say."

"Very well, sir. Which room shall I get ready?"

"Room! What for?"

Mrs. Muff was growing bewildered. "I thought you said a gentleman was returning with you, sir. I asked which bed-chamber I should prepare for him.

"My own."

"Certainly, sir," answered the housekeeper, hesitatingly. "And in that case, which room shall I prepare for you?"

Mr. Castonel laughed; such a strange laugh. "I will tell you then," he replied. "You must also send for the gardener, and get the garden done up. Send to-morrow morning, and let him begin. John can help him: he will not have much to do whilst I am away."

"Except mischief," added the housekeeper. "I'll keep him to it, sir."

"And, Muff, if anyone comes after me to-night, no matter who, or how late, say I have gone to an urgent case in the country, and send them to Mr. Rice. You remember now, *no matter who*. You may tell the whole town to-morrow, and the deuce besides, for all it can signify then."

"Tell what, sir?"

"That I have gone out for a week's holiday."

Mrs. Muff withdrew, utterly stupefied. She thought that she was beside herself, or that Mr. Castonel was.

That same evening, not very long after the above interview, Ellen Leicester, attended by a maid, left her home, for she had promised to take tea with Mrs. Chavasse. In passing a lonely part of the road, where the way branched off to the railroad, they came upon Mr. Castonel. He shook hands with Miss Leicester, and gave her his arm, saying that he was also bound for Mrs. Chavasse's. "I will take charge of you now," he added; "you need not trouble your maid to come any further."

"Very true," murmured Ellen. "Martha," she said, turning to the servant, "if you would like two or three hours to yourself to-night, you may have them. Perhaps you would like to go home and see your mother."

The girl thanked her, and departed cheerfully towards the village. Could she have peered beyond a turning in the way, she might have seen a post-carriage drawn up, evidently waiting for travellers.

The time went on to nine. The rector and his wife sat over the fire, the former shivering, for he had caught a violent cold. "I suppose you have some nitre in the house?" he suddenly observed.

"Really—I fear not," answered Mrs. Leicester. "But I can send for some. Will you touch the bell?"

"Is Benjamin in?" demanded Mrs. Leicester of the maid who answered it.

"No, ma'am. Master said he was to go and see how Thomas Shipley was, and he is gone."

"Then tell Martha to put her bonnet on. She must fetch some nitre."

"Martha is not come, in, ma'am, since she went out to take Miss Leicester."

"No!" uttered Mrs. Leicester, in surprise. "Why, that was at six o'clock. I wonder what is detaining her."

Benjamin came in, and was sent for the nitre, and soon Martha's voice was heard in the kitchen. Mrs. Leicester ordered her in.

"Martha, what do you mean by staying out without leave?"

"Betsy has been on at me about it in the kitchen," was the girl's reply. "But it is Miss Ellen's fault, ma'am. She told me I might have a few hours for myself."

"When did she tell you that?" demanded Mrs. Leicester, doubting if Ellen had said it.

"When we came to Piebald-corner, ma'am. Mr. Castonel was standing there, and he said he would see Miss Ellen safe to Mrs. Chavasse's, and it was then she told me."

The rector looked up, anger on his face.

"Did you leave her with Mr. Castonel?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Then understand, Martha, for the future. If you go out to attend Miss Leicester, *you are to attend her*. You have done wrong. It is not seemly for Miss Leicester to be abroad in the evening without one of her own attendants."

"Now this has finished it," he continued, to his wife, as the girl withdrew. "Ellen shall not go there again unless you are with her. Mr. Castonel! How dared he? I would rather Ellen made a companion of the poorest and lowest person in the village. And should there be any engagement growing up between him and Frances, I will not have Ellen there to countenance it with her presence."

"Poor Mr. Winnington prejudiced you against Mr. Castonel," observed Mrs. Leicester. "I do not admire or like him, but I think less ill of him than you do. Perhaps Frances might do worse."

The clergyman turned his head and looked at her. "I will ask you a home question, Susan. Would you care to see him marry Ellen?"

"Oh no, no!" and Mrs. Leicester almost shuddered as she spoke. "Not for worlds."

"Yet you would see him the husband of Frances Chavasse; your early friend's child!"

Mrs. Leicester hesitated before she spoke. "It is that I hope to see

Ellen the wife of a religious man, a good man, and I fear Mrs. Chavasse does not consider that for Frances. She thinks of social fitness, of position, of Mr. Castonel's being in favour with the world. But Ellen—no, no, I trust never to see her the wife of such a man as Mr. Castonel."

The minister covered his face with his hands. "I would rather read the burial service over her."

When Benjamin returned, he was despatched for Miss Leicester, and told to hasten. But he came back and said Miss Leicester was not there.

"Not there!" exclaimed the rector. "Why, where have you been for her? I told you to go to Mrs. Chavasse's."

"That's where I have been, sir."

"Then you have made some stupid blunder. She must be there."

"I don't think I made any blunder, sir," returned Benjamin, who was a simple-speaking man of forty. "When I told 'em I had come for Miss Ellen, one of their maids joked and said then I had come to the wrong house, but she took in the message, and Mrs. Chavasse came out to me. She said as they had expected Miss Ellen to tea, and waited for her, but she did not come."

Nothing could exceed the indignation of the rector. Where was Ellen? Where could she be gone? Was it possible that Mr. Castonel had persuaded her to go visiting anywhere else? In spite of his wife's remonstrances, who assured him he was too ill to venture forth, and would catch his death, he turned out in search of her; and Mrs. Leicester, worried and angry, laid all the blame upon Martha, who immediately began to cry her eyes out.

Before noon the next day, Ebury was ringing with the elopement of Mr. Castonel and Ellen Leicester.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECOND MRS. CASTONEL.

Mr. and Mrs. Castonel returned to Ebury, and the whole place flocked to pay them the wedding visit. The disobedience of Ellen Leicester was no business of theirs, that they should mark their sense of it. And Ellen—had it not been for the recollection of her offended parents and the unjustifiable part she had acted—how supreme, how intense, would have been her happiness! Her whole existence lay in her husband; she could see no fault in him; and could they then have tasted of the Tree of Life, so that the present might be for ever, she might have given up all wish of a hereafter. Amongst the visitors went Mrs. and Miss Chavasse; and, whatever mortification might have been in their hearts, it was not suffered to appear; that would never have done. So Mrs. Chavasse contented herself with abusing,

elsewhere, the somewhat faded furniture, and thanking fate that *her* daughter had not been taken to a home so carelessly appointed.

Months went by, and how felt Ellen Castonel? Why, the fruits of her conduct were beginning to come home to her. She had received the forgiveness of her parents, for when she went to them in prayer and penitence, and knelt at her father's feet, the minister, though he strove hard to spurn her away, according to his resolution, yet he was enfeebled in health, enfeebled by sorrow, and it ended in his falling on her neck with sobs of agony, and forgiving her. It had been well could he as easily have forgotten. In these few months he had become a bowed, broken man. His hair had changed from brown to grey, and it was rumoured that he had never, since, enjoyed a whole night's rest. Could this fail to tell on Ellen? who, excepting that one strange and unaccountable act, had always been a gentle, loving, obedient daughter. She watched it all, and knew that it had been her work. Moreover, there were arising, within her, doubts of Mr. Castonel—whether he was the idol she had taken him to be. She was also in bad health, and suffered much. She looked worn, haggard, wretched; curious comments on which went about Ebury; and the people all agreed that Mrs. Castonel did not seem to repose on a bed of roses.

"There's a row up-stairs," exclaimed the tiger to Hannah, one day in April. "Missis is sobbing and crying buckets full, and master has been a blowing of her up."

"How do you know? Where are they?" said Hannah.

"In the drawing-room. I went up to ask what medicine was to go out, but they were too busy to see me. I heard master a roaring as I went up the stairs, like he roared at me one day, and nearly frightened my skin off me. It was something about missis going so much to the parsonage: she said it was her duty, and he said it wasn't. She was lying on the sofa, a sobbing and moaning awful."

"I think you must have peeped in," cried Hannah. "For shame of you!"

"In course I did. Wouldn't you? Oh dear no, I dare say not! Master was kneeling down then, a kissing of her, and asking her to forget what he'd said in his passion, and to get herself calm, for that it would do her unknown harm. And he vowed, if she'd only stop crying, that he'd take her hisself to the parsonage this evening, and stop the whole of it with her——"

"What is that you are saying?" sharply demanded Mrs. Muff, putting her head into the kitchen.

"I was a telling Hannah she'd best sew that there button on my best livery trousers, what came off 'em last Sunday, or she'd get her neck wrung," answered the lad, vaulting away.

Whether the tiger's information was correct, and that excitement was likely to have an injurious effect upon Mrs. Castonel, certain it is, that the following day she was seized with illness. The nature of it

was such as to destroy the hope that had sprung up in her heart, and precisely similar to that which had preceded the death of the first Mrs. Castonel.

"What an extraordinary thing!" cried Mrs. Chavasse, when the news reached her; "it looks like fatality. Caroline had been six months married when she fell ill; and now, in like manner, Ellen falls ill! I hope she will not follow her fate out to the last, and die of it."

"For the matter of that, we never knew what the first Mrs. Castonel did die of," returned Mrs. Major Acre, who was sitting there. "She was recovering from her sickness; indeed, it may be said that she had recovered from it; and she went off suddenly one evening, nobody knew with what."

"Mr. Castonel said it was perfectly satisfactory to medical men," said Mrs. Chavasse. "There are so many dangerous tricks and turns of maladies, you know, only clear to themselves."

For several days Ellen Castonel was very ill. Not perhaps in absolute danger, but sufficiently near it to excite apprehension. Then she began to get better. During this time nothing could exceed the affection and kindness of Mr. Castonel; his attention was a marvel of admiration, allowed to be so, even by Mrs. Leicester.

One afternoon, when she was dressed and in the drawing-room, Mrs. and Miss Chavasse called. They were the first visitors who had been admitted. Frances offered to remain the rest of the day, but Mrs. Chavasse overruled it: Ellen was not strong enough, she said, to bear so many hours' incessant gossiping.

Mr. Castonel came in whilst they sat there. He was in high spirits, laughed and talked, almost flirted with Frances, as in former days, when she had erroneously deemed he had a motive in it. When they left, he attended them to the door, gay and attractive as ever in the eyes of Frances; and she pondered how Ellen could ever appear sad with such a husband. Mr. Castonel then went into his laboratory, where he busied himself for half an hour. When he returned upstairs, Ellen was in tears.

"Don't be angry with me, Gervase. This depression of spirits will come on, and I cannot help it. I fear it is a bad omen."

Mr. Castonel turned away his head and coughed.

"An omen of what, Ellen?"

"That I shall never recover."

"You have recovered. Come, come, Ellen, cheer up. I thought Mrs. Chavasse's visit had done you good."

"Last evening, when I sat alone for so many hours, I could not help thinking of poor Caroline. I wondered what it could be she died of, and——"

"Ellen!" burst forth Mr. Castonel, "it is wrong and wicked to encourage such absurd thoughts. You asked me the other day, when you were lying ill, what it was she died of, and I explained it. It is not going to occur to you."

"No, no," she answered, "I am not really afraid. It is only in the quiet evening hours, when I am alone, that I get these foolish fancies. If you could be always with me, they would not come. Try and stay with me to-night, Gervase."

"My darling, I have not left you one evening since you were ill until the last, and then it was not by choice. I know of nothing to call me forth to-night. Should anything arise unexpectedly, I must go, as Rice is away. In that case, I should tell Muff to remain with you."

She still wept silently. It seemed that her spirits had sunk into a terribly depressed state, and nothing, just then, could arouse them. Mr. Castonel stood and looked down at her, his elbow leaning on the mantelpiece.

"Would you like Mr. and Mrs. Leicester to come this evening?" he asked.

"Oh!" she cried, clasping her hands and half rising from her chair, the pallid hue giving place to crimson on her lovely face, and the light of excitement rising in her sweet blue eyes—"oh, Gervase, if you would only let me ask them? Papa has never been here to remain an evening with me: he would come now. It would do me more good than everything else. Indeed I should not have these fears then."

He went to a table and wrote a brief note, putting it into Ellen's hands to read. It was to the effect that his wife was in low spirits, and much wished them both to come in to tea and spend the evening with her.

"Thank you, thank you, dearest Gervase," she exclaimed, "you have made me so happy. Oh, papa!"

"Ellen," he said, gazing into her eyes, "confess. You love your father better than you do me."

"You know the contrary, Gervase. I love him with a different love. I left him for you," she added, in low, almost reproachful tones, as she leaned forward and hid her face upon her husband's arm, "and people say that it is killing him."

The tiger was despatched with the note to the parsonage, and brought back a verbal answer that Mr. and Mrs. Leicester would soon follow him.

They both came. They sat with Ellen and her husband. Mrs. Leicester made tea; and for once Ellen was happy. There appeared to be more social feeling between her husband and father than she had ever hoped for, and a joyous vision flitted across her of time bringing about a thorough reconciliation, and of their all being happy together. She laughed, she talked, she almost sang; and Mr. and Mrs. Leicester inquired what had become of the depression spoken of in Mr. Castonel's note. He answered pleasantly that their presence had scared it away, and that if they did not mind the trouble of coming out, it might be well to try the experiment again on the following evening; he could see it was the best medicine for his

dearest Ellen. They promised to do so, even Mr. Leicester. Especially, he added, as he must now leave almost directly.

The glow on Ellen's face faded. "Why leave, papa?"

"My dear, there is a vestry meeting to-night, and I must attend it. Your mamma can remain."

"Will you not return when it is over?" resumed Ellen anxiously.

"No. It will not be over until late. It is likely to be a stormy one."

"But you *will* come to-morrow! And remain longer?" she feverishly added.

"Child, I have said so."

"Upon one condition—that she does not excite herself over it," interposed Mr. Castonel, affectionately laying his hand upon his wife's.

"Add that proviso, sir."

"Oh, if Ellen is to excite herself, of course that would stop it," returned the rector, with a smile. 'The first smile his countenance had worn since her disobedience.

Ellen saw it, and her heart rose up in thankfulness within her. "Dearest papa," she whispered, leaning towards him, "I will be quite calm. It will be right in time between us all: I see it will. I am so happy!"

At seven o'clock they heard the little bell tinkle out, calling together the members of the select vestry, and Mr. Leicester took his departure. His wife remained with Ellen, Mr. Castonel also; nothing called him out; and they spent a happy, cordial evening together. When she rose to leave, Mr. Castonel rang the bell for Mrs. Muff to attend her. He would not leave Ellen.

"What nonsense!" said Mrs. Leicester. "As if any one would run away with me! I shall be at home in five minutes. I need not trouble Mrs. Muff."

"It will do Muff good," said Ellen. "She has never stirred out since my illness. And then, mamma, she can bring back the receipt you spoke of."

"Good night, my dear," said Mrs. Leicester, stooping to kiss her. "Do you feel better for our visit?"

"I feel quite well, mamma," was Ellen's joyous answer. "Nothing whatever is the matter with me now. Only," she added, laughing, "that I am a little thirsty."

"That is soon remedied," said Mr. Castonel. "I will bring you some wine and water, Ellen."

"How thankful I am to see your mistress so much better," exclaimed Mrs. Leicester, as she and Mrs. Muff walked along.

"Ma'am, you cannot be more thankful than I am. I have been upon thorns ever since she was taken ill. Poor Mrs. Castonel—I mean Miss Caroline—having been cut off suddenly by the same illness, was enough to make me fearful."

"Poor Caroline!" sighed Mrs. Leicester, with more truth than caution. "I wish she had lived."

"She is better off," was the reply of the housekeeper. "There is nothing but crosses and cares for us who are left. I hope, ma'am, you and Mr. Leicester will come in often now. You can have no conception of the effect it has had upon my mistress to-night: she is a thousand pounds nearer being well."

Mrs. Leicester turned to her. "Do you think Mr. Castonel makes her a good husband? You and I, Mrs. Muff," she added, in tones which seemed to bespeak apology for herself, "knew each other years before this stranger ever came near the place, and I speak to you as I would not to others. He seems affectionate, kind, but—what do you think?"

"I cannot answer you, ma'am," replied Mrs. Muff, "I wish I could. Before us he is all kindness to her; and yet—I don't know why it should be, but I have my doubts of its being sincere. I force the feeling down, and say to myself that I was set against Mr. Castonel at the first, through the injury he did my old master. I had my doubts in the same way of his sincerity to his first wife. And yet, I don't notice it in his manners to other people."

"Does he go to see that—person now?" asked Mrs. Leicester lowering her voice.

"Well, ma'am, I can't say. All I know is, that the other—servant or whatever she may be—who lives with her, was at our house lately."

"Indeed!"

"It was a night or two before my mistress was taken ill. There came a quiet knock at the door. John was out, and Hannah was up-stairs, turning down the beds, so I answered it myself. She asked for Mr. Castonel. I did not know her in the dusk, and was about to show her into the study, where master sees his patients, but it flashed over me who it was; and I said Mr. Castonel was not at liberty, and shut the door in her face."

"Was Mr. Castonel at home?"

"He was in the drawing-room with my mistress. And I believe must have seen her from the windows, for he came downstairs almost directly, and went out."

"Did Ellen—did Mrs. Castonel see her?" breathlessly inquired Mrs. Leicester.

"Ma'am, I have my doubts she did. No sooner was Mr. Castonel gone, than the drawing-room bell rang, and I went up. It was for the lamp. While I was lighting it, my mistress said, 'Muff, who was that at the door?'"

"That put me in a flutter, but I gathered my wits together, and answered that it was a person from the new shop—for of course I would not tell her the truth."

"What did they want?" asked my mistress.

"Brought the bill, ma'am," said I. For luckily the new people had sent in their bill that day. And I took it out of my pocket, and laid it on the table by her.

"'What could the person want, walking before the house afterwards, and looking up at the windows?' then questioned my mistress.

"'Quite impossible for me to tell, ma'am,' I said; and I won't deny that the question took me aback. 'Perhaps they wanted a little fresh air, as it's a warmish night, and the street is open just here?'"

"Was that all that passed?" demanded Mrs. Leicester.

"That was all. Mr. Castonel was not in for two hours afterwards, and I heard him tell my mistress he had been out to a most difficult case. I'll be whipped if I believed him."

"Is he out much in an evening?"

"Very often, he used to be, before my mistress was taken ill. He is always ready with an excuse—it's this patient, or it's that patient, that wants him and keeps him. But I never remember Mr. Winnington to have had these evening calls upon his time."

They reached the parsonage, and entered it. The housekeeper was to take back the receipt for some particularly nourishing jelly, which Mrs. Leicester had been recommending for Ellen. It was not immediately found, and Mrs. Muff sat with her in the parlour, talking still. The rector came in from the vestry meeting, and she rose to leave.

Conscious that she had remained longer than was absolutely needful, Mrs. Muff walked briskly homeward. She had gained the door, and was feeling in her pocket for the latch-key—she possessing one, and Mr. Castonel the other—when the door was flung violently open, and the tiger sprang out, for all the world like a real tiger, very nearly upsetting Mrs. Muff, and sending her backwards down the steps.

"You audacious, good-for-nothing monkey!" she exclaimed, giving him a smart box on the ears. "You saw me standing there, I suppose, and did it for the purpose."

"Did I do it for the purpose?" retorted John. "You just go in and see whether I did it for the purpose. I'm a-going to get the horse, and tear off without saddle or bridle for the first doctor I can fetch. It's like as if Mr. Rice had took his two days' holiday just now, a purpose not to be in the town!"

He rushed round towards the stables, and Mrs. Muff entered. Hannah met her with a shriek and a face as white as ashes. "Mrs. Castonel—oh, Mrs. Castonel!" was all she cried.

"What is it?" asked the terrified Mrs. Muff.

"It is spasms, or convulsions, or something of the sort," sobbed Hannah; "but I'm sure she's dying! She's taken just as Miss Caroline was. I am sure she is dying!"

Once more, as connected with this history, rang out the passing-bell of Ebury. And when the startled inhabitants—those who were late sitters-up—opened their doors and strove to learn who had gone to their reckoning, they shrank from the answer with horror and dismay.

"The young, the beautiful, the second Mrs. Castonel!"

And again a funeral started from the house of the surgeon to take its way to the church. But this time it was a stranger who occupied the clergyman's chariot. Mr. Leicester's task was a more painful one; he followed as second mourner. Many people were in the churchyard, and their curiosity was intensely gratified at witnessing the violent grief of Mr. Castonel. The rector's emotion was less conspicuous, but his feeble form was bowed, his steps tottered, and his grey hair streamed in the wind. On the conclusion of the ceremony Mr. Castonel stepped into the mourning coach, solemnly to be conveyed home again at a mourning pace; but the rector passed aside and entered the parsonage. The sexton, a spare man in a brown wig, was shovelling in the earth upon the coffin, and shedding tears. He had carried Ellen many a time over the same spot when she was a little child.

(To be continued.)

DOUBT NOT.

WHERE are the swallows fled?
 Frozen and dead,
 Perchance, upon some bleak and stormy shore.
 Oh, doubting heart!
 Far over purple seas
 They wait in sunny ease,
 The balmy southern breeze
 To bring them to their northern homes once more.

Why must the flowers die?
 Prisoned they lie
 In the cold tomb, heedless of tears or rain.
 Oh, doubting heart!
 They only sleep below
 The soft white ermine snow,
 While winter winds shall blow,
 To breathe and smile upon you yet again.

THE ROMANCE OF SPAIN.

BY CHARLES W. WOOD, F.R.G.S., AUTHOR OF "LETTERS FROM MAJORCA," "IN THE LOTUS LAND," ETC., ETC.



HOUSE OF IGNATIUS LOYOLA.

ST. SEBASTIAN has one thing in common with Irun—it owes almost everything to beauty of situation. But whilst the one has remained a small insignificant frontier town visited by few and unknown to most, the other has developed into a fashionable watering-place. In summer St. Sebastian is lively and crowded: the Trouville of Spain: for the remainder of the year it almost resembles one of the dead cities of the Zuyder Zee. Streets are deserted, many houses are empty, melancholy marks it for its own. The hotel shutters are half drawn, doors are closed. In the shops people sit with folded hands and patient attitude, waiting for next year's swallows and next year's summer days.

When they arrive, some 30,000 visitors arrive with them from many parts of Spain, and the dead town wakens to life and animation. Here every year comes the Queen with the young king, who, humanly speaking, owes his life to his mother's care and watchfulness: and perhaps somewhat to the splendid sea and pure air and fine sands of St. Sebastian. It is the Queen's favourite resort, and she has been very constant to it. Earnestness is a part of her nature, combined with a keen sense of her responsibilities, and a maternal affection that includes not only her children but her people. Consequently she is very popular. It was charming to hear the terms of universal admiration and reverence applied to her. "But for the Queen we should have had a Republic long ago," was a frequent remark. "And that," they would add, "would be a disaster for Spain—even Republicans admit it."

"But that seems a contradiction," would come the objection. "How can Radicals think that a Republic would be a mistake?"

Then a shrug of the shoulders and the reply : "They do think so in their heart. Their own turn is what they want, not the good of the country. A fixed Government is what we need, and they know it. Uncertain ruling has been the curse of Spain and has brought her to her present state of decay."

But no one who visited St. Sebastian during the months of July, August and September would dream of associating decay with Spain, or want of wealth or energy. Unfortunately it is for pleasure that the Spaniards find a superabundance of time and strength. This directed into more wholesome channels would once more bring to the front all the resources of the country, which are still great. But they have eaten the Lotos-flower and the consequences are everywhere apparent.

No wonder that all flock to St. Sebastian who can. The sands are white, hard and beautiful; the bathing is some of the finest and safest in the world; the water is a splendid green, so clear that quite far out you may see the white sand below. Where the 30,000 visitors find house-room is a mystery, for many are fastidious and will not be crowded. But the town evidently has unseen possibilities.

To-day there was no evidence that anything of the sort was ever needed. The carriage stopped of its own accord in front of the wonderful bay, just as though the horses themselves wished to be refreshed with the beauties of nature. The driver turned his head, evidently delighted with our enthusiasm. Not far off the water rolled upwards in a long line of white foam that broke and died away upon the shore. The cliffs rising to a great height were crowned by the Citadel.

The streets were deserted. The afternoon shadows were lengthening with slightly depressing influence. Emphatically the place was out of season, the times were out of joint. The houses looked large and modern; a sort of miniature Paris with boulevards; a disappointing element. Even Irun had been more picturesque, for there at least the streets were narrow and quaint and uncomfortable—just what one expected. But St. Sebastian suggested luxury and ease. With the influence of Fontarabia still full upon us, these streets looked hopelessly commonplace. We turned to H. C. His face had a very blank expression. "Not even a señorita visible, to grace the streets with her soft mantilla and airy footstep," he said, in woe-begone tones. "This modern element is check the first. Shall we find many more checks in fair Castile?"

"There will be lights and shadows, no doubt," we returned; "new and old, good and bad. Many a place with a great reputation will hardly be worth visiting; others almost unknown will prove dreams of beauty. We must take things as we find them."

"It is the unexpected which happens," quoted H. C.

Presently we turned into great gates and a garden and stopped before a large building; evidently the hotel. There were no signs of

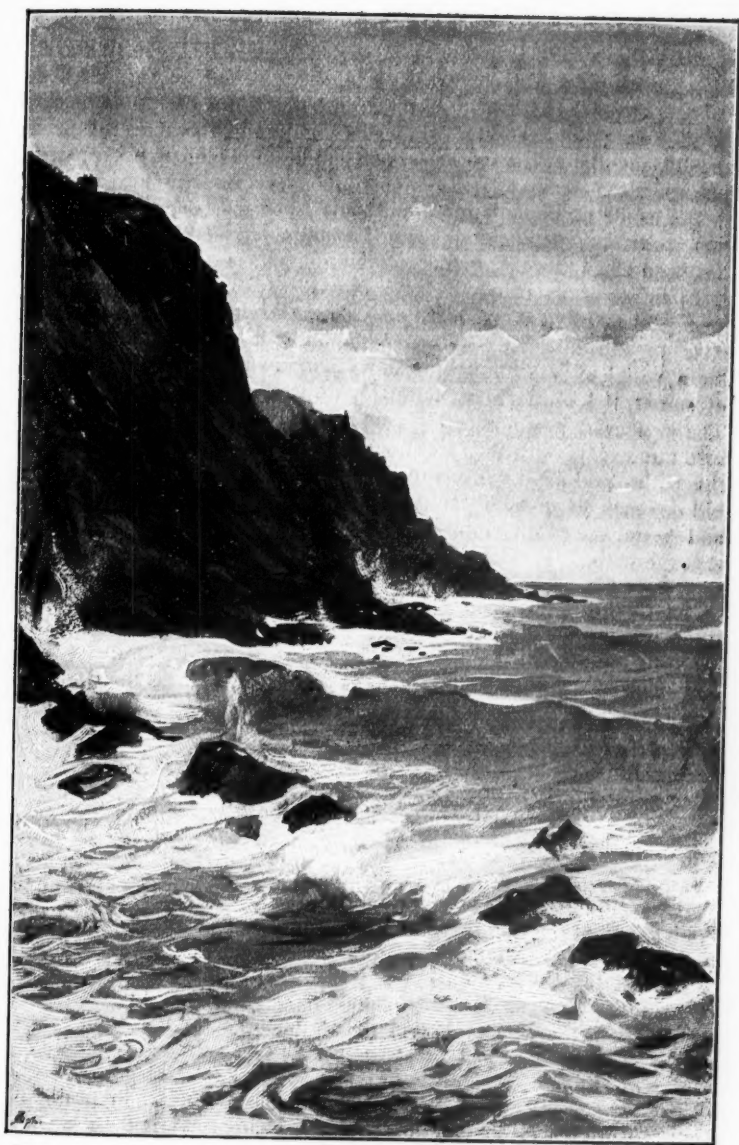
life about it. Shutters were closed ; no one appeared at the door ; our untimely arrival had awakened no interior emotion. No train was due, and no one was supposed to arrive by carriage. That was all very well for the season or the days gone by, before railways existed. We rang the bell ; it echoed alarmingly. After long waiting a woman appeared, gave one glance at us and rushed away as if we had been fiends in human form, ghouls, vampires. This was not promising. Everything seemed still and dead. But soon we heard a stir and a bustle and then half-a-dozen of the *personnel* swept down upon us, headed by the landlord and a charming daughter. H. C. was even then proposing that we should try to find some hotel facing the sea, but he stopped abruptly and now declared this perfection. In Spain all hotel-keepers consider themselves ladies and gentlemen : and certainly the daughter of the Hotel d'Angleterre behaved in a very ladylike and well-bred manner, was full of information, and spoke perfect French. Her father was not less polite, and at the end of our experiences we decided that it was the best and most comfortable inn in Castile.

Yet our first moments of arrival were chilling. This, however, soon passed away, and we found ourselves installed in luxurious rooms. Our next experience of an inn was just as unfortunate—but we will not anticipate.

We went out before the sun set and the shadows disappeared, turning instinctively towards the sea and the esplanade, where the view was more impressive than ever, now that it could be taken in leisurely. At the end of the walk the sea, calm though it was, beat against the sides with a sound of thunder and fell back in showers of spray. The waters of the bay swept in majestically, roll after roll ; gently dying out on the white sands in small waves and long lines of white curling foam. We had seldom seen water so clear and brilliant. Right and left, the magnificent rocky coast stretched far down and round the small rocks jutting out of the water, the sea swirled and eddied and boiled and dashed itself into spray. The effect of a great storm, such as often visits the Bay of Biscay, must be beyond all description. We longed for a tempest, but the glass was set at fair weather.

So far, St. Sebastian has nothing disappointing. But as we turned from the sea and sought for wonders in the town itself we found them not. It has nothing in the way of antiquities. Its streets are ordinary and commonplace, from an artistic point of view. From any other point of view it might be considered a very fair town, with wide, well-built thoroughfares. The churches are uninteresting, and not even worth examining.

A great deal of St. Sebastian has sprung up in the last twenty years, chiefly to accommodate the yearly influx of visitors. Once upon a time it was a small place enclosed in ancient walls, and that was its picturesque period. It has a history and a past, in which the English have had their share. At the great Battle of St. Sebas-



ST. SEBASTIAN.

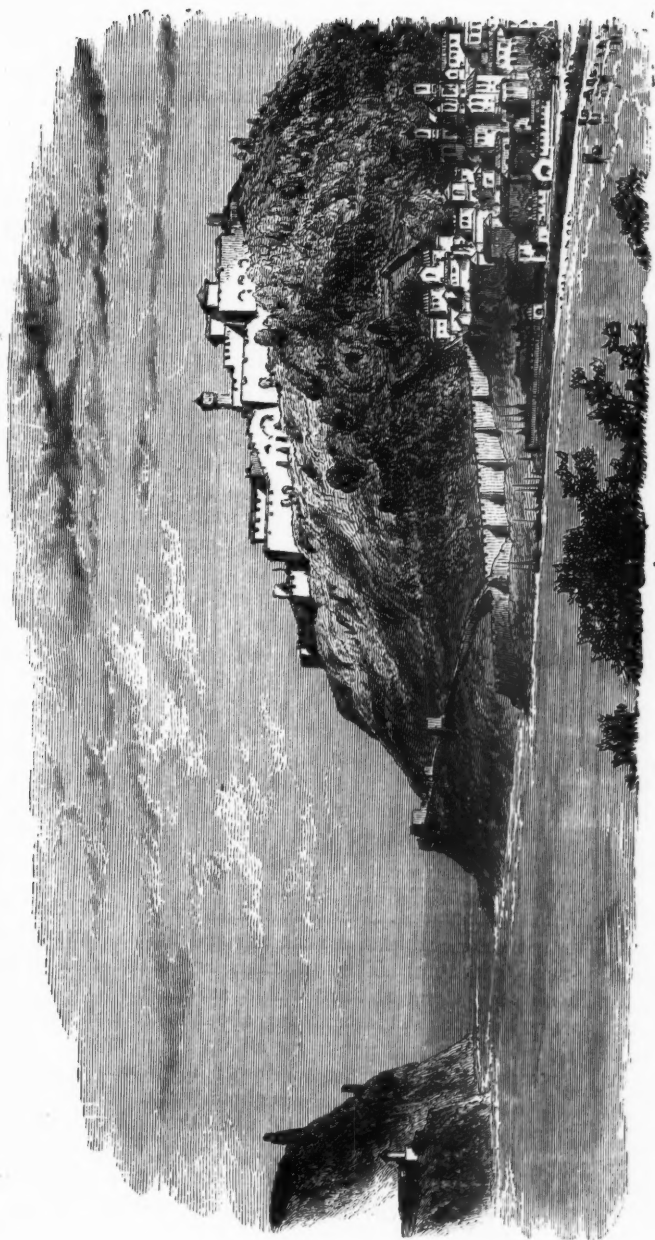
tian in 1813, the English captured it from the French, and burnt the town. Those were great days and sad days. Even Wellington found it not easy to take this almost impregnable fortress; but it fell at length, with great loss on the part of the besiegers. The English soldiers are said to have been guilty of great cruelty, irritated perhaps by their long-delayed triumph. No wonder, therefore, that nearly all the ancient part of the town has disappeared in favour of a commonplace modern element.

But as we suddenly lighted on the port, we felt that here at last was something picturesque. Few harbours are so beautiful, and it has been chiefly formed by nature.

In front of us rose the little island of Santa Lucia, fortress-crowned, guarding the entrance. It lies immediately between the cliffs of the mainland, leaving just sufficient space on both sides for a vessel to pass through. As we first saw it, bathed in the flush of sunset, it looked almost unearthly in its colouring and refinement. The wonderful green waters played about its base. On either side rose the heights, with their tree-lined terraced walks. Sentries guarded the paths, and higher up, strong embattled fortifications seemed to bid defiance to an approaching enemy. Within all was the harbour and basin, the quays running round so much in the shape of a shell, that the harbour is called *La Concha*. At the foot of the cliffs ran a long row of low white houses in strange contrast with the green cliffs and waving trees stretching above them. Every here and there in the midst of this greenery one caught sight of the bright red coat of a sentry. Small vessels and steamers were alongside the quays, but everything was still and tranquil, as if work were over for the day.

At the head of the quay stood an old arched gateway, more or less ancient, large, roomy and substantial. Within this a few women were selling fish and fruit, a mixture whose scents did not harmonise. This reminds us that we found the grapes at St. Sebastian exquisite; large muscatels of the purest flavour, to be had for a mere trifle; grapes that are expensive luxuries in England. We found them nowhere else in the Basque country; other grapes in abundance, but never again muscatels. We asked and searched in vain. Here the apples and pears were also large and excellent: but as a rule the fruit in the north of Spain is poor and not abundant. Men lounged idly about the porch, hands in pockets, as men are wont to lounge on quays. They stood about, shouting and talking in the voices peculiar to the Spanish. If they put as much energy into their brains and work they would be a great people.

We revelled in the beauties of sunset; the flush and golden haze, the wonderful colours in the sky—for these sunsets in northern Spain exceeded any we had ever seen elsewhere. We felt we should like to take up our abode for a time on that little island of Santa Lucia, so near the world, so far away from it, for ever gazing upon the wide expanse beyond. What wonderful changes day by day does it



ST. SEBASTIAN.

not put forth. The great swelling rollers that come sweeping in one after another in a chase that never ends. The calm days when the sun flashes and glints upon the gently moving surface; when skies are blue, the air soft and balmy, and one feels in paradise. Again, days of darkness and shadow, and strong winds, and seas that roar and run mountains high, as if to defy the very power of Heaven itself. A vessel far out seems one moment lifted to the black sullen clouds, the next sinks into the trough of the waves. The great cradle of the deep it may well be called, but without the gentle motion that soothes to slumber. Slumber, indeed, it gives too often, but it is the long, last sleep that knows no waking, and the wide resting-place is amidst the hidden treasures of the deep.

All this one sees from one side of the little island of Santa Lucia, nor need suspect the existence of a world of movement, a human crowd, restless and rushing as the ocean tide itself.

But turn to the other side and this is evident enough. It is a very different scene, all life and activity. The harbour is crowded with shipping, and the quays are lined with houses. Above the roofs rise the church towers, outlined against the sky; the bells are for ever ringing out the fleeting hours or calling worshippers to matins or vespers, one or other of the many services "between daybreak and sundown." But the bells of Spain are like the voices of the people, harsh and unmusical, as though Time himself were protesting at the wasting of the golden hours. About the ramparts the red coats of the sentries flash out in the sunlight, a bright bit of colouring. In the harbour small vessels are preparing to put to sea. Others are gently gliding in one behind another, steering carefully between the narrow isthmus. But there are many days when there is neither coming in nor going out; day after day passes, and the quays and the harbour have rest, and every day seems a Sunday. For St. Sebastian is not the London or Liverpool of Spain. This is reserved for such towns as Barcelona with its wonderful possibilities; and a romantic situation which seems to throw a charm over its hardest work and roughest labourer.

When night falls upon St. Sebastian, still the outlines of the town may be faintly traced against the dark sky and flashing stars. The church towers loom out. Their interiors are silent and closed; worship is over; nothing remains but a sickly smell of incense; nothing can be seen but shadows flitting about aisles and roofs that may be shadows of troubled ghosts for all we know, unless they are broken lights coming through the windows: moonbeams, or nearer and more earthly and less poetical gas glimmerings. But the harsh bells still go on chiming the hours; and when the twelve slow strokes of the most witching hour vibrate upon the air, any one shut up within the quiet church will fancy the shadows multiply and take more tangible form. The ghosts are holding their receptions.

Standing at night on Santa Lucia, the reflections of the ship-lights

in the harbour dance upon the water. All down the quay the shops are brilliant. In summer the pavement is crowded with people sauntering to and fro, for the Spaniards even exceed the French in their love of being out of doors. Often their streets are thronged, as if it were a Lord Mayor's Day or a great jubilee. They tread upon each other's heels, and too often forgetting the right of way, come to a blockade. This daily parade seems to be their great idea of recreation. Yet it is not the fresh air they love. They seal up their houses with double windows, and open them not once a month. The men walk abroad with great mufflers and Spanish cloaks if the slightest



ON THE WAY TO AZPEITIA.

fresh breeze is blowing away the germs of illness and malaria. The consequence is they are often weak and delicate, susceptible to changes of temperature.

But in autumn and winter the quays are deserted. The few people seen hurry along, and shiver as they walk. It may be that the air is only just pleasantly fresh, but to them it seems laden with ice. Cloaks are thrown round the shoulders, and there is nothing visible of the face but the eyes and the tip of the nose.

Still standing on Santa Lucia, long after the sun has gone down to light other worlds, and darkness has fallen upon ours, there is some excuse for thinking the night wind cold; but even then, if you are an

Englishman, you will brave it without the many folded cloak. Lights gleam from many a window, and there is hardly any other sign or sound of life. Still the church towers loom out against the night sky, the stars shine and flash silently, the cracked bells mark the flight of time.

These bells are a most intolerable nuisance in many a town, not only of Spain. But throughout Spain we certainly found them so. There is sure to be a church near your hotel, with a full complement of bells, more or less crazy, their tones given to "divagations" flat and sharp. They chime the hours through the night, not omitting the quarters. Sleep is restless in consequence. But about four in the morning you do fall into something of a sound slumber, only to be awakened at five by a furious pandemonium of sounds. You start up at the first moment thinking it is fire, or an earthquake. It is nothing but what they would consider a musical call to matins, or low mass. After this a mass seems to go on every quarter of an hour until seven o'clock : for every quarter of an hour a fresh crash startles your shattered nerves. But at seven, as it is time to get up, they obligingly cease ; peace falls upon the air. Your head aches, you feel distracted, your brain throbs as though it would never come right again—all that is as nothing. In fact, it is as it should be, they argue ; it may be looked upon in the light of penance, a wholesome influence. We can only say that many a time, when tortured by sleeplessness and the agony of never-ceasing peals, if we had possessed the power of the "Three Wishes" one of them would certainly have been used to suspend all bells for ever until the world was well awake.

That first evening upon the quay at St. Sebastian the bells were silent, as far as services were concerned. Vespers were ending. Just to the right, a long flight of steps, a perfect Jacob's Ladder, led up to a church : the church of the Carmelite nuns. A few Spanish women in black mantillas, full of graceful movement, were moving up and down. Those going upwards looked almost as though they were bidding farewell to the world, and were about to pass through the portals never to return—so remote seemed the little sanctuary. H. C. gazed upon them with all his soul in his eyes. One charming and lovely creature turned at the very end of the flight and gave him a look full of sentiment and expression. She had beautiful black eyes, large, appealing, beseeching ; a pale pensive face, that might have sat for a new Beatrice Cenci. He was persuaded the look was for him and clasped his hands in a mute admiration. We knew quite well that she had only turned to utter a word to a friend passing downwards. But we are not susceptible, and Reason never deserts her throne.

H. C. went up the Jacob's Ladder two steps at a time. It was not graceful, but probably it was impassioned. We followed in a more dignified manner, as became Mentor, and passed through the portals into the little church, keeping a quiet eye upon H. C., prepared for eccentricities and a remonstrance from the imposing beadle,

with his mace and cocked hat and gold-braided uniform. It would not be the first time—figuratively speaking—we had had to take him out of pound, like a stray sheep in a country village—by soothing the feelings of the scandalised *Suisse* with a silver charm. Lady Maria, who knew his susceptible weakness, had once hinted that she would be responsible for all fines, a kindly offer we had luckily declined: for once when we showed her the sum total of what had gone in this way during a tour in Brittany, she turned pale and said she would have nothing more to do with him. But Lady Maria is like some of the very best people in the world, who bark a good deal,



ON THE ROAD TO AZPEITIA.

but never bite. The very next day after solemnly renouncing him, he called with an elaborately prepared propitiatory poem, which he had sat up half the night to compose. It was sweetness wasted on the desert air—rather to his disappointment. No sooner had he entered his aunt's boudoir—she was collationing upon early strawberries and orange flower water—than she rose and throwing her arms round his neck, greeted him with "My dear nephew!" The poem never saw daylight.

As we passed into the church at St. Sebastian, the houri was not visible. A small group of women in mantillas knelt upon the marble

floor in penitential but most picturesque attitude : an attitude full of devotion. They were all so much alike that it was impossible to distinguish one from another : and not one of them turned or made any sign of recognition.

The church was in semi-darkness : that chiaroscuro that is so wonderfully striking and effective. A few lights gleamed here and there, casting their pale rays around. A perfume of incense was perceptible. The altar was slightly lighted up and a priest was officiating. Behind a grating we caught sight of some silent, motionless kneeling figures. They were the Carmelite nuns. Suddenly the organ commenced to play a melody and from behind that grating the voice of a nun rang forth in some of the sweetest and most silvery tones ever heard. In the world it would have made fame and fortune. We stood entranced, enthralled, wishing the pure and beautiful voice would go on for ever. But after a few minutes of rapture, during which we felt lifted to a paradise, the voice ceased, the organ died away, the priest turned and gave a benediction ; all was ended. We saw the outlines of the nuns disappearing in absolute silence, as though they had been shades from the land of spirits, not women still clothed in mortal bonds. Lights were extinguished, the altar was left in darkness. The graceful penitents rose from their knees, and one by one touching the holy water, filed out into the night air.

We turned to H. C. expecting him to follow. He was leaning dejectedly against a marble column, pale, subdued, emotioned. "Let us go," we said. He did not move. "That voice," he whispered. "I feel as if it ought to have been my Destiny. Is my life to be blighted after all ?"

A sound of locking up brought him to his senses. A blighted life is a charming subject for contemplation, from a melancholy point of view, but if it is true that "*ventre affamé n'a point d'oreilles*," it is equally certain that sentiment will not take the place of "wholesome faring." For a heaven-born poet, H. C. realises this truth in a very wonderful manner. He has no sympathy with Lady Maria's refined collations and invariably declines them ; much to her surprise.

The sound of locking up and the jingling of keys, restored him to the ordinary world and a substantial frame of mind. We too passed out of the church, and the old Suisse locked the great doors upon us—but we were now on the right side.

Twilight was passing into darkness : the evening star trembled in the sky, large and luminous, a liquid, silvery point. Extremes meet. As we passed down the quay, a confectioner's displayed its dainties. Our coffee-and-bowl experiences at Irun seemed to belong to the last century ; we might be said to have fasted for twenty-four hours. The temptation was too great for H. C. who has not the resisting power of a St. Anthony. "Nature abhors a vacuum," said our poet. "We don't dine till eight o'clock. I cannot lose this opportunity." And he turned in to the displayed snares.

"Will you have the goodness to give me one of those," he said to the amiable woman behind the counter, pointing to some small cakes in the window.

"Ah ! Monsieur désire une madeleine ?" she asked, for she did not understand English.

"Magdalene !" cried H. C. blushing to the very tips of his ears ; "certainly not. I don't approve of them. What do you mean by asking such a question ?" And without further parley, he walked round the counter and helped himself to one of the cakes under discussion. "Really," he added, turning to us, "these people in St. Sebastian must be very much in need of the Lord Chamberlain, or the County Council, or Prowling Prudes, or whoever looks after the moral welfare of society."

We explained the matter to him, but he was not altogether satisfied. "The sooner they change the name of the cakes, the better," he said, helping himself to his fourth. "They are most excellent."

Meanwhile madame behind the counter, looking at H. C. as if she thought him an eccentric gentleman, entertained us with a history of the place. In winter it was worse than a monastery ; it was a desert ; but in summer it was paradise. The Queen ? Ah, la belle dame ! she came every year and really helped to make the fortune of St. Sebastian. No one so amiable, no one so good. The young King was delicate, but everyone hoped he would develop into a strong man by-and-by. Thirty-thousand people visited St. Sebastian every year, and the season was a series of fêtes. She frequently had her shop so full of people there was not room to move, and it often happened that when they closed at night there was neither cake nor bonbon left in the place.

So she ran on ; but by the time H. C. had helped himself to his eighth madeleine we grew somewhat alarmed, and settling the complicated account, departed.

The next morning found us again on the Port, looking, in the early sunshine, less dreamy but quite as picturesque as under the evening sky. The Jacob's ladder was there, leading up to the Carmelite church. The church was open, but no lovely voice rang through the aisles ; all was silent and deserted, with the exception of here a kneeling figure, and there a penitent in the confessional box.

The quays were somewhat more lively ; a vessel or two seemed preparing to put out to sea ; Santa Lucia looked glorious. We braved another Jacob's ladder and ascended to the citadel. The sentries were at their posts, and we envied them their perpetual outlook. A winding path led round to the front, where we had nothing before us but the ever-sounding and mysterious main. The heat was intense in spite of the autumn season ; the sky had not a cloud.

Soon we came to a spot full of sad interest. Here on the slopes was a little English graveyard : the resting-place of those English

officers who had fallen in the wars in the early part of the century. Small graves, white crosses, railed-in tombs stood out against the green embankment. Some of the names and records had become almost illegible. One was to the memory of Sir Oliver de Lancy: another to Colonel Tupper: a third to the young wife of Staff-Surgeon John Callander: a fourth to Lieutenant Henry Backhouse, who died valiantly: a fifth to Colonel F. C. Ebsworth. All had fallen in the cause of duty. Some had died in the flower of youth, and their records seemed especially sad. But a more lovely resting-place could not be imagined; scarcely a more fitting; for above them were the walls of the citadel, crowning the heights, and not far off, sentinels for ever kept guard. The sea sings them a perpetual requiem, more solemn and beautiful than the pealing anthem; and round about them in winter the wild birds wing their flight. Vessels for ever pass to and fro amidst the uncertain waters of the Bay of Biscay; gliding into the far western horizon at sundown, as though they also had set out upon their eternal voyage. We stood far above the sea, and now looked down upon Santa Lucia with its white lighthouse. Few towns are so gloriously placed as St. Sebastian.

One brilliant morning we started on a long drive of nearly thirty miles to Azpeitia, the birthplace of Ignatius Loyola.

The lightest carriage and strongest horses the town could boast had been provided by our attentive landlord, who had every appearance of keeping the hotel for his pleasure rather than for profit. It was one of those days in which existence alone seems sufficient delight, and all we ask is to bask in the sunshine and blue skies, breathe the pure air, and gaze in silence upon the laughing beauties of earth.

A substantial hamper had been packed under H. C.'s direction, including a large supply of his favourite olives to bring out the flavour of a special bottle of Laffitte: all for his own private consumption, for we held luncheon a mistake. Had Lady Maria been there she would have fainted at the long list of substantial dainties. Thus laden, we started in the early morning: the landlord impressing speed upon the driver, and arranging to send post-horses to meet us half-way on the return journey. Few of our Spanish experiences equalled this in charm. The day had been purposely made for us. Every step of the road was full of interest; there was no monotony, and no time for the mind to rest from delightful impressions.

As we left the town behind us we passed a church from which a stream of people were issuing. They were on H. C.'s side, and at the moment we were studying a map. "What a crowd!" cried H. C. after we had gone by. "What service can have been going on? A mass for the dead? They are all in black, and every one carries a bogie."

"A bogie!" we cried startled at the ghostly suggestion, and

jumping up. We are a light weight, but for a moment the carriage swayed and was nearly overturned by our impetuosity. And then we found that, like H. C.'s poem and Lady Maria's anger, it was a false alarm : wasted emotion. The bogie proved to be nothing more formidable than a *bougie*. H. C. had had a little joke at our expense. There had been a funeral, or a requiem mass, and this was the conclusion. A picturesque procession, the women gracefully draped in veils and mantillas. Each carried a long white



FONTARABIA.

candle : and they filed away as though going to a churchyard to offer up prayers at, perhaps, a newly-made tomb.

All signs of life and civilisation were soon exchanged for the untouched beauties of nature. Our way led through lovely fertile valleys. Trees rich in autumnal tints coloured the landscape with rich rainbow hues. To our right rose wooded slopes where one felt one could dwell for ever. To our left ran a deep and silent river, its steep banks covered with ferns, wild flowers, and a profusion of bracken and low bushes. Here and there a bridge spanned the stream, grey with age and picturesque with Gothic arches ; sometimes covered

with a velvety green lichen, exquisite in tone. Occasionally a large gabled cottage, adorned with vine-leaves and rich creepers gave life and romance to the scene. At rare intervals we passed through a village or small town. The first we came to was quaint with ancient houses and overhanging eaves, and some good iron-work. But the interior of the church was uninteresting, as so many of the Spanish churches are. The exceptions are wonderful, but as a rule they are debased in architecture: so depressing that after a time, knowing what to expect, we contented ourselves with the outside, rather than submit to the architectural shock we knew to be inevitable. Many a time when we did enter, we fled precipitately.

The scenery was very diversified. Now the valley narrowed and closed in, now widened into rich plains bounded by the undulating Pyrenees. Now we descended to the level of the plain, now rose high above the world. At one small quaint old village we crossed the water, which here was wide, and was no longer the river but an estuary of the sea. White houses stood out in the glaring sunshine, reaching up the slopes, and in the water their vivid reflections looked like a submerged city. Between the points of the land—high cliffs—one saw the lovely sea beyond, stretching out to the horizon, calm, green and transparent.

Presently we reached Zaraus; a small fashionable sea-bathing place, where many of the Spanish nobility have summer villas. Here we halted to rest the horses. Everything was closed and silent, but in the season all is very different. It was a small town with narrow streets, one of them containing a curious 15th-century house with a half ruined tower. The church was not remarkable; but near it was an old house with an arched doorway and small quaint turrets which had once been a convent dedicated to San Francisco: a somewhat interesting building. The charm of Zaraus was its sea, rolling over smooth white sands, wide and expansive. The shores were deserted. Far down we traced the splendid outlines of the rocky coast, round which the sea gently ebbd and flowed and foamed.

The horses started off again, fresh and vigorous, after their long halt. The character of the scenery was much the same; plains and valleys widening and narrowing; a wealth of verdure and fertility; villages that looked like dreams of romance, remote from the world. At length, between four or five hours from the time we left St. Sebastian, we came in sight of Azpeitia, and knew that we were nearing our journey's end.

The town was far more picturesque than we had anticipated, with its narrow streets and overhanging eaves full of light and shadow. There were crowds of people dressed in many colours: many of them driving heavily-laden donkeys. We had expected to find a "dead city"—and behold it was large, bustling and thriving. The old-fashioned market-place, strewn with the artistic pottery

that is in daily use, was thronged with buyers and sellers. Evidently it was market day, but how so great a crowd had assembled in this remote spot seemed a mystery until we remembered that it is less remote than it appears. The country is well populated and there are several towns not far off: amongst them Cestona, with its mineral waters and much frequented baths. The church tower with its open belfry was curious, and opposite to it was a wonderfully interesting old house with Moorish façades of the fifteenth century. There was a good deal of the Moorish element about Azpeitia, which added much to the interest of the place. Narrow turnings opening unexpectedly upon some wonderful old house, delighted one. As our driver rattled through the streets with great noise, the people flew right and left, and the sensible donkeys took possession of the doorways.

Our journey did not end here, but about a mile further on. We passed through the town out into the open country again. The great plain was surrounded by the Pyrenees; a broad valley shut in, as it were on all sides, by the mountains. Through this valley ran the little river Urola, crossed by quaint old bridges, where perhaps Ignatius fished for trout in the days when he had not exchanged the sword for the cowl. In front of us, a mile distant, on the southern slopes, we saw the monastery rising effectively amidst the hills, its great dome standing out in conspicuous outlines.

This was our goal. It had been a long drive and a rapid, and we were not sorry to see its termination. Down the straight white road the horses went with a will, knowing their well-earned rest was at hand. Finally crossing a bridge, we drew up at the foot of a long flight of white steps, above which rose the solemn dome. One could not admire the architecture, but it was undoubtedly imposing; partly, no doubt, from the halo of romance surrounding the spot. The dome was the church; the wings of the monastery extended far down on either side; wings without any special feature about them. One could only regret that Fontana did not choose a better model for his work than the Pantheon at Rome. The interior of the church, though in bad taste, is richly decorated with costly marbles. Its vastness, silence and solemnity give it a certain effect. One feels also, unconsciously, its remote position—its exquisite situation on the Pyrenean slopes.

The house in which Ignatius Loyola was born in 1491 forms, as it were, the nucleus round which the convent has been built. It is the only really interesting part of the immense pile, with its small-arched court and venerable façade. The upper part is of small red brick, with charming windows. The family of Loyola was ancient and noble. Over the entrance are the remains of the family arms, dating from the tenth century: a device consisting of a camp-kettle swinging from a chain between two wolves: and the motto: "*Lobo y olla*"; a play upon the word Loyola. A wolf was the badge of the ancient

Spanish nobility : as the blood-red hand has been the sign of knight-hood with us.

Loyola was born in eventful times. It was the year in which Columbus set out to discover new worlds : and Ferdinand and Isabella were reigning. He was christened Inigo, but called himself Ignatius, after the martyr Bishop of Antioch. His father was very severe with his children ; his mother was a woman of great piety and gentleness. The history of the saint is well known : how, somewhat wild and gay at the commencement of his career, he, during an illness, read the fathers. This had such an effect upon him that, on recovery, he decided to devote himself to a religious life ; gave up writing love-sonnets to fair and noble ladies, threw aside sword and armour, and became a monk : eventually establishing the Order of the Jesuits. But they presently became a very different sect from that he had founded, and in this day bear very little resemblance to the original order. There seems ever to have been something chivalrous and generous about him, and the history of his life at Court, characterised by some of the gallantries of the times, yet reveals a fine mind, high aspirations, and a never-failing bias towards the better and nobler side of life. It only wanted a period of inaction and reflection to turn his views to the opposite extreme of asceticism.

Passing through the small arched court of the original house, we rang the convent bell. The door was answered by a lay brother in *Soutane*, but with head uncovered. Asking for one of the fathers, we were admitted to a large waiting-room, where in a few minutes the father came to us. He was tall and thin and spoke excellent French and English, had seen much of the world, and seemed to have nothing bigoted or narrow-minded about him. They are not monks here, but fathers, neither cloistered nor spending their lives in penitential cells. It is more especially a convent for students, of which there are 100, whilst there are only twelve fathers. There are also a number of lay brethren.

Our guide, who seemed to possess sociable qualities, conducted us over a portion of the immense building. It was unnecessary to see the whole, one wing being a repetition of another. The convent was founded in 1681 by Maria Anna of Austria, wife of Philip IV.—perhaps as an expiation for the weak reign and imperfect character of that luckless monarch. The corridors were plain, bare and white-washed, and seemed endless in number and extent. With the exception of a student or lay brother hurrying along, they were deserted. The doors of the students' rooms bear each the name of its occupant : and on leaving his room he has to indicate on the door to what part of the building he is bound : otherwise, if suddenly wanted, in this great labyrinth he would never be found.

We went into one of these rooms. It was barely furnished with necessities : a hard chair to sit upon and a hard bed for sleeping,



AZPETIA.

round which white curtains were drawn. A small deal table at which the student sits and works.

But the walls were white, and everything was clean, and in at the open window came a flood of sunshine, whilst the glorious view lay beyond. A quaint and interesting garden behind the monastery was full of fruit, flowers and vegetables. In a large refectory the bare tables were spread in readiness for the evening meal: and as we passed through the kitchens men-cooks were preparing a mountain of fish for supper. Something in the pot-au-feu on the immense stove smelt savoury, but we might be sure it was of some simple character. Seldom indeed did any cooking in Spain send forth pleasant fumes! It was a large, light, airy kitchen, in which you might have roasted an ox, and like everything else about the monastery, was the very pink of perfection and cleanliness.

An old and exquisite staircase belonged to the original house, into which our conductor admitted us by a private door and a magic *passee-partout*.

At once we were in a new, ancient and picturesque world. The low rooms in which Loyola and his people lived were full of charm, and contained many treasures: but only a few of these rooms remain. From one of them a door led into the private chapel. It was here that he recovered from his wounds, for which reason it was afterwards consecrated. Beneath the altar in a recess an effigy of the Saint studying the Scriptures may be seen: and it was there that his bed was placed. The walls were decorated with carved scenes taken from his life. The portion in which we found ourselves was separated by a *reja* or iron railings from the larger and outer portion, to which the public are admitted. One woman was kneeling in prayer.

But there are seasons of pilgrimage to this *Santa Casa*, when crowds come to and fro. The greatest of these is on the 31st of July, the day on which, in 1556, St. Ignatius died at Rome. This is made a public festival, and is worth attending if one happens to be in the neighbourhood. The *Zorzico*—that curious Spanish performance—is danced in the Plaza on the first day; on the second there is a bull-fight, which is indispensable to the Spaniard's enjoyment; and on the third the *Inego de Pelota*—the Spanish tennis—brings the whole to a conclusion.

Our visit to the convent left us pleasant recollections. When it was over we had still much time before us, for the horses needed several hours' rest: and we returned to Azpeitia to examine its points more leisurely, our conductor accompanying us some portion of the way. Had we wished to remain the night, they would willingly have given us hospitality, and we should have made one with them at their frugal board, and probably have slept not less soundly because the beds were harder than usual. But we had arranged to return to St. Sebastian.

A plantation of pollard trees grew in front of the building, at the

foot of the long flight of steps. Passing beyond these into the charming valley, our guide presently took a friendly leave of us, hoping we might meet again in England, which he contemplated visiting. We went on our way towards Azpeitia, standing out before us at the foot of Mount Itzarritz. As we looked back we watched the tall slight figure, made taller and slighter by his black soutane, slowly ascend the long flight of steps and disappear within the convent walls. He might have been passing away from the world for ever, so still, so silent, so secluded and remote is the whole place. On we went through the wonderful valley. Beside us the little river ran its course; the hills rose in all their beauty of outline, hill behind hill. The country people passing greeted us with a "good morrow" in Spanish patois. The sun gilded all, but was sensibly declining now; the shadows were lengthening. Yet our day was by no means over.

We crossed the little stream by a narrow bridge, and entered the town near the quaint market place with its arcades. But what a change! The pottery had all disappeared; the crowd had departed; the streets were deserted. Magic seemed to have been at work. Now it resembled the dead city we had expected to find it. Market was over; business was at an end; buyers and sellers had no further need of each other. Whilst we had been shut out from the world in the convent, this small section of that world had scattered north, south, east and west, leaving no trace behind. But the picturesque element remained to the town; perhaps struck one even more forcibly. The bells of the quaint church with its 18th-century Doric façade, struck out the hours; and the old Moorish house bore witness to the passing centuries. Outside many a door sat an inhabitant of the town, plying his trade. This was invariably the making of straw or rope shoes, much worn by the Spanish peasantry, which they sew together with a long needle and strong thread, not too particular as to an exact imitation of the human foot. It is not a very picturesque labour—like the making of lace, by which many of the Spanish women gain a pleasant and artistic livelihood—but it is a trade that never fails. It keeps the wolf from the door, and if it does little else, the careless air of the men, the loud voices raised in perpetual chatter, the frightful noises they make and imagine it singing and melody, prove their contentment.

We realised that afternoon, if never before, that much seeing is a weariness to the flesh. Before we turned our backs upon Azpeitia for the second time, we felt we had earned the rest that was still so distant. Even the Moorish and Mauresque remains began to lose their charm as we turned once more into the broad and lovely valley. The convent a mile away looked at least ten miles distant. On each side the great building, almost like dependencies, was an hotel. These owed their existence to the Santa Casa, and probably there are times when activity and energy are necessary on the part of the keepers.

One of these had given shelter to our equipage : a large, gloomy, prison-like, greystone building.

Towards this we went down the long white road. A frisky run-away donkey was far ahead of us. He seemed to thoroughly appreciate his liberty, as legs and tail made circles and squares in the air, now a parallelogram and now a circumbendibus. Behind us hurried an excited woman and two boys. One boy carried a stick with a pin at the end, the free application of which had evidently caused the donkey to take the law into his own hands. They are not always the stupid animals they are called. But he evidently knew how far he might carry his joke, for he presently stopped and looked round with an air of affectionate innocence.

Then we all found ourselves in a group together, and the donkey's fallen sandbags were replaced, and one of the boys mounted him, sitting just in front of his tail. We administered a lecture upon the cruelty to animals, confiscating the stick by way of practical application : enforcing the moral with a small silver argument, which no doubt went much further than the exordium. If truth were told we wished ourselves in the boy's place on the donkey's back ; but if noblesse oblige, so does dignity. Man also is a vain animal, with a keen sense of the ridiculous, especially when directed to himself.

We all parted excellent friends, and we are persuaded that the donkey understood the whole matter, and, could he have spoken like his very far-gone ancestor, would have returned thanks. He went off with a most amiable flourish of the tail, whilst we, crossing the bridge, made for the grey stone inn and sank into the first seat. "Had you taken some lunch and half that bottle of Laffitte," said H. C., "you would be equal to doing all this over again. For my part I feel as if I could jump over the moon, or write a sonnet to My Lady's Eyebrows."

"Which lady ?" we asked, for their name is legion. But to this he was discreetly silent.

We asked for tea, and they brought us a decoction of chopped hay in large bowls. Nevertheless it was refreshing and in five minutes dissipated all bodily fatigue. We sat in front of the hotel, at a little iron round-table, the great convent building to our left, the wide valley with its surrounding hills to our right. The scene was absolute poetry and romance, full of depth and mystery. Near us the small stream rippled on its course. In the distance the setting sun was gilding the houses of Azpeitia with a special but alas fleeting glory. The shadows were more than lengthening—they were disappearing. When our driver put to his horses, and came round, twilight was sensibly falling. The evening star flashed palely in the sky.

"We shall have a night-drive home," said H. C. "It will be splendid under the stars. But," he added in a more melancholy strain, "we shall not be able to dine until ten o'clock. I have heard that too much fasting is bad for digestion."



AZPEITIA. CONVENT OF IGNATIUS LOYOLA IN DISTANCE.

Away we went, down the long white road, the horses fresh and vigorous as ever. The convent stood out mysteriously in the evening light, with its background of hills; the very essence of calmness and repose. No wonder there are men who, storm and tempest-tossed, heartworn and weary, at last seek refuge and oblivion within a monastic cell: ending life at least in a semblance of peace. On we went, dashing through the quiet streets of Azpeitia; the eternal cobblers at their doors pausing in their work to look after the retreating cavalcade. Darkness overtook us, and a chill night air, which made rugs and coats, despised in the morning, now indispensable. Making way through plains and valleys, up mountain passes and down zigzag paths, we presently found ourselves surrounded by a cold, heavy, damp mist, which wrapped the whole country as in a shroud.

Still the horses galloped on bravely, until with some rejoicing we found ourselves at Zaraus. Fortunately we had not to wait. Our host had sent post-horses to meet us, and in a few minutes with a fresh driver, we were once more on the road. But this new man was twenty years younger than the late one, and if we had gone fast before, we now flew over the ground. Presently all mist cleared away, we passed out of the marshy region, and rejoiced in the dark outlines of the hills and the flashing stars above.

At last we found ourselves nearing our journey's end. The lights of St. Sebastian began to gleam and glimmer amongst the slopes. We passed the church where the *bogie* procession had commenced its vagaries; a turn and the lamps of the port became visible with their watery reflections, and we traced the dim outline of graceful Santa Lucia.

A few minutes, and we had reached our hotel; the landlord hastened forward and congratulated us upon what had been a very rare and perfect experience: a day of sunshine and blue skies, with an especial brightness that even a cloudless day may be without. The landlord's charming daughter stood just inside the hall, and as we passed up to get ready for a well-earned repast—it was now half-past nine—we left H. C. in the seventh heaven of bliss, expatiating to her in the most enthusiastic poetical-prose upon the beauties of nature, and the privilege of composing a sonnet *au sourire de Mademoiselle*: a subject that, for him, was certainly included in the ROMANCE OF SPAIN.

A WATER HORSE.

BY MAY CROMMELIN.



FEW people may even have heard of this species of animal.

It is known in Ireland, nevertheless, and said to inhabit certain lonely loughs, or rivers. In these it is seen perhaps twice in a century; to the amazement and terror of whatever privileged individual has ventured unawares into its favourite haunts and beheld with his own eyes the creature rear its horrid head from the bed of waters where it at other times reposes.

Perhaps no one alive knows more of the subject than myself. The only other man who saw one—to my knowledge—in the last ten years, is dead.

On the face of the matter it would seem that as the water-horse is of such rare and peculiar Irish breed, it is strange an Englishman should have had the luck to make acquaintance with one. But it happened in this way.

Being newly appointed adjutant to the Black Northern Militia, Colonel Douglas, who then commanded the regiment, asked me to stay for a week or two at Castle Douglas till they should be called out, when the mess would be in full swing. Our head-quarters were in Ballygobbin town, a mile off, where I ultimately got lodgings over the "flesher's shop." Staying at the castle was pleasant, excepting that every few days there came over me certain vague and longing sensations, which some people term tugging at one's heart-strings, and that made me want to be in quite another place.

This was naturally Cushenderg Rectory, where Aileen Connolly was pricking her pretty fingers sewing her own wedding-gown, and only woman knows what else besides for our marriage in summer. Now she was the whole cause of my seeing the water-horse. For if I had never seen her, what would have brought me, Gilbert Lennox, Captain in the Moss-troopers, over to Ulster? And if we had not been engaged, what would have moved me to accept the adjutancy of the Black Northerns, or made me drive, ride or

tramp over to Cushenderg, however dog-tired, on every possible opportunity?

The Rectory was nine miles from Castle Douglas by road. But as the crow flies it was only about half as far: the reason being that a river lay between us which widened for a mile and a half into a long narrow lake. This lake was a lonely place hardly ever frequented, for the road took a great curve to avoid it. At the lower end however there was a cottage where a man kept a crazy flat-bottomed boat, as I had found out when shooting wild duck thereabouts in the winter. And once or twice when it was inconvenient for the Colonel to lend me his dog-cart, I walked over to the lake and borrowed the boat which was kept at the Castle Douglas side, you see. As it was little used, all I had to do was to tie the boat to some bush after crossing, where it remained awaiting my return. Generally this happened fairly early, as my host liked my company at dinner, and the Castle Douglas cook was first-rate. But sometimes I was beguiled to staying later at the Rectory, not returning till eleven or so at night.

On these occasions Hughie Beck, my servant and an ardent militia-man, looked at me in admiring doubt. Then, while laying out my clothes, he would remark, avoiding my eye and adopting a dryly jocular tone:

"There's some men in the country would not be just anxious to cross that lake after dark."

"Why not, Beck? Are there any boys about on bad business?"

"That I can't undertake to say. But" (with an effort) "you might see the *wather-horse*. Did ye never hear tell of him?"

As his fame had not yet reached me, Hughie enlightened my ignorance. With this faithful follower I always assumed a reflective countenance when the talk turned on banshees or bogies. This was no hypocrisy: folk-lore is often interesting, and a smile will freeze the most piquant details on the lips of the rustic narrator.

Hughie's story was vague but condensed itself to this. Some forty years ago, and various times before then according to tradition, a fearsome monster had been seen swimming in the lake. Popular fancy varied the accounts of its appearance, so that Hughie could no more describe it than he might the sea-serpent. But it had a great head like a horse, and the forelegs of it churned the water white. Then it came out to graze upon the banks, and seeing a man watching it, pursued him with open jaws. Had he not fled for his life there was no telling what would have happened. But some *did say*—here Beck's voice dropped two notes, though he affected an airy smile—some *did say* there was more than one had been lost in the lake when boating near nightfall. And they had come to their end by no ordinary means.

Well, there came an afternoon late in May when Colonel Douglas drove me round by Cushenderg. He could not stay long, having an engagement to dine with his wife at a neighbouring county magistrate's

house. I seized the chance naturally to propose spending a whole blissful evening at the Rectory. So my worthy host drove off, leaving us after some playful witticisms which stained Aileen's cheeks, that were generally of milk rose-leaf hue, till they looked as if she had been slapped.

After my betrothed had recovered from the uncomfortable confusion into which this old joker had thrown her, we spent an idyllic evening together. I can remember now, as we sat on a crazy wooden bench, lost to view, a few yards from the house-porch, the patch of white clover exhaling honey scent at our feet, and the lilac bushes that embowered us. And across the tender dusk of the sky northern lights streamed up, wavered, and died out mysteriously.

To make the evening still pleasanter, Bill Connolly, my best friend, brother-in-law-to-be, happened to have arrived home unexpectedly.

When Aileen reluctantly said good-night, with last injunctions not to be too late for my midnight walk, his reverence genially sat up with Bill and me for awhile. Then he too went upstairs leaving us old comrades together.

The smoking den was partially detached from the dwelling-rooms of the Rectory, so that our voices disturbed no one. This consideration, and some very good whiskey, made us feel we had much to say to each other. So that the clock hands had crept round to the small hours of the morning before I recalled Aileen's parting behest. However, I was not likely to be back at Castle Douglas *late*, as Bill and I agreed with friendly grins. Quite the contrary.

"You are certain sure this boat of yours is on the right side of the lake, Gillie?"

"On the right! It never once struck me until this moment! I fully meant to send Hughie Beck over about that blessed old tub, and something put it out of my head 'clean and clever' as he would say. Well, no matter. A walk will do me all the good in the world. There will be time for a cold bath and coffee before the recruits begin their musketry."

"By the holy poker, what a fine thing it is to be in love," murmured Bill in his beard admiringly.

"Oh, good evening—and don't finish the whiskey," was my retort, dropping out of the study window, so as to avoid any noise in opening the house door. I started on my way.

Of all the lovely nights I ever was out in that one comes back to my memory as the most delicious. By day the country around was not especially beautiful, but that May night it seemed transfigured. On either side of the road the hedgerows showed ghostly white with masses of hawthorn.

Beyond, the meadows were like dark lakes of springing grass ruffled in waves by the breeze. The landrail's cra-a-ik was hoarse music, perhaps, yet its call brings happy boyish memories always back, and I could better miss many a feathered songster with sweeter voice

"Nine miles! It will be pretty good going!" was my mental remark as, putting my mind to the task, I stepped briskly out. The whole earth lay asleep. Except the landrails, an owl that flitted once past noiselessly, and myself, nought seemed waking.

What was that?

There came a panting close behind; then a whitish creature sprang upon me snuffling and whining as if eager to devour me, body and bones.

"Why, Duchess—there, there—down, old girl! What on earth brought you after me?"

The assailant was a young pointer of mine they kept for me at Cushenderg. It had taken a tremendous fancy to me, and was always trying to sneak off at my heels when I left the Rectory. On this especial evening Duchess had followed me to the study, deserting her usual mat in the hall. And while Bill stood meditatively at the open window by which I had taken leave, she roused from sleep, and made a sudden bolt for freedom. After hunting for her master vainly round by the stable, deaf to Bill's whistles, she had struck my track, and was as overjoyed as if we were old friends meeting after years.

"What a vast amount of affection a dog does waste on everyday trifles. You're a nuisance; that's what you are. But as you won't go back, you must come along now."

After all, a dog is not a bad companion for a night walk. Soon I found myself caressing Duchess's head when she thrust it against my hand. And with a pleased sense of having a perfectly trustworthy and sympathetic confidant, I whispered brief utterances of ecstasy recalling late bliss, hinted vague golden hopes for the future that I would not have told to the ears of any but one other living being. Good Duchess! she responded with affectionate caresses; threw no cold water; asked no questions.

By now I had got over about three miles of the road and looked regretfully towards the dark rising ground that hid the lake. Suddenly a happy idea entered my brain.

A cold bath in the morning would be certainly necessary to reinvigorate my muscles after this midnight tramp.

Well, why not have it on the way? The lake end was not too much to attempt for a good swimmer, as I boasted myself to be. Then it was only a short way back to the castle. The key of the side-door was in my pocket. And two hours' good sleep will refresh me mightily for my morning's work. Hurrah—here goes!

So master and dog struck across country with renewed zest, mutually pleased at the prospect of a novel experience. And soon we had mounted the hilly ground ahead and looked down on the grey lake lying placid in its darker setting of hills and bushes.

Dawn had not yet begun to redden the eastern sky. Now and again there came a chirp, or a rustle from some thicket as we brushed through. Otherwise all was as still as if the earth were holding its breath.

Arrived at a grassy spot by the waterside I undressed with satisfaction, and soon stood like primeval man on the shore. Rolling my clothes into a tight bundle I tied them firmly to my stick; as to my boots, once the laces were well fastened together they hung round my neck safe enough. So equipped and holding both stick and garments high over my head with one hand I slipped like an eel into the cool wave and began swimming across. As a cold bath the lake was a luxury. It was delicious after the first plunge; and in spite of the awkwardness of keeping the scarecrow of stick and clothes well upright I got on splendidly, but for Duchess. She swam faster than her owner, and her white body kept circling round and round me, while she splashed the water and made as much noise, snuffling and breathing hard as a young hippopotamus.

Now there was light enough to distinguish objects fairly when we got near the other side. And there was a man on the bank fishing for bream.

At least he had been fishing, but on hearing the noise made by the unknown animal swimming in the darkness he stopped and stared with open eyes and mouth. Small blame to him! For what must have become visible, stroke by stroke, to his horrified vision was a reptile with a neck little thicker than your thumb rearing a shapeless mass of a head out of the water.

The man seemed fairly paralysed with fright. He stood only a few yards off when I first noticed him, and by his attitude could not turn his staring eyes away from the big and little monsters approaching the bank.

Perhaps he thought himself safe on the land, but the poor fellow was soon undeceived. For feeling the water shallow, I rose to my feet, still holding, as a matter of precaution, the stick and clothes above my head.

It never struck me that this added to my stature, making me nearly nine feet high.

And I had just begun to call out, "Hallo! there, don't be frightened," when he let a shout out of him they might have heard at Cushenderg. Dropping his rod he turned and ran as if old Nick was at his heels. Just for the fun of it, I gave a yell or two and ran after him. Not far though, for it was rough ground to go over bare-footed.

"Come back, you fool!" I shouted, adding human explanations, at the top of my voice.

But there was not a sound in answer and he had scudded out of sight.

Thereupon I stopped and dressed myself with an easy conscience. Uprose the sun as I entered Castle Douglas demesne. The birds were all twittering in thicket and tree. And down lay I and slept for two hours and more the sleep of a just man.

Aileen and I were honeymooning in a new and exhilarating fashion,

on the top of a railway carriage attached to an engine driven by Bill, on a new line and principle of his own over Mont Blanc and adjacent peaks, when a peculiarly violent jolt wakened me from this dream of bliss. Beck was shaking my shoulder and calling in my ear :

"Captain Lennox, sir, you're late. It's twenty minutes since I woke you, and old Douglas will be raising ructions if the horse and machine is kep' waiting. An' Mr. Newman the butler is standing with his watch in 'is hand, downstairs this minnit to give you till the last before he thunnars the gong."

Hughie, despite my guiding efforts at polishing this rough son of the soil, relapsed under excitement into his native manners. Time pressed too greatly to permit of my impressing some facts on his attention. Firstly that he never had wakened me, and further that he should transfer some of his respect for Newman, the butler, to the wealthy landowner and master of the castle whom he irreverently termed old Douglas.

A tremendous hurry in dressing and the news, over a brief breakfast, that my host was suddenly obliged to leave home for some days, prevented any mention of my adventure of the preceding night. Her ladyship, who kept me company for some days, would not have justly appreciated the tale, so I put it by to keep for the Colonel over "the walnuts and the wine."

Indeed, it slipped my memory till the night of his return. Then some jesting allusion of his about lovers' pilgrimages recalled my darkling swim in the lake. "And who was the man you frightened?" asked the Colonel, laughing heartily.

"I haven't an idea."

But next morning brought an answer. My factotum Beck had seemed bursting with suppressed news for a day or so, like an inflated bladder awaiting a prick. A remark of mine that I was going to Cushenderg and meant to cross the lake acted as a pin.

"Did ye hear the news that's going in the country about that lake? Faith, it's true too. Well, as sure as you're here, Captain Lennox, sir, the man what *used* to herd the cows about this very place saw the *water-horse*. He was there five nights ago, fishing——"

"What? Never mind, Beck, go on."

"Well, and he heard an awful snorting in the water, and then a water-horse that had a pup swimming alongside it com' towards him, at the sight of which he near lost his senses. It had a fearsome head and goggling eyes an' a neck like an eel. Then it stood up, and man! it was forty feet high. It came roaring after him, like a dozen mad bulls. So he run for dear life; but troth! if he saved his life the one way he lost it the other. For he never stopped or tuk breath till he got home here till his own door. And the two next days all the neighbours was going to see him in his bed, an' he just whispered like, telling them what he could. But you're laughing!"

"Beck, did you never wonder what wet my boots the other night ; and how I got back from Cushenderg ?" Whereupon I told the true tale.

My story ended, to a silent accompaniment of Hughie's gaping and facial contortions, I triumphantly announced :

"So now, I'll have to visit the man who herds the cows, and tell him rather more."

"It's another man now," said Beck gloomily. "*He's gone.*"

"Gone ! Where to ?"

"God rest his soul, that I cannot say. But he died. They're burying him to-day."

Through the window came the slow strokes of a church bell.

"Hughie !" said I solemnly. "There are a deal too many fools in this world, and one less is a blessing."

"Faith, if you go on, Captain, you'll soon dispopulate the country of a good few of them."

And then both Beck, and later on the Colonel himself, begged me earnestly to keep my own counsel about the incident.

As a matter of fact I did have a regretful feeling inwardly for some time, which was weak ; but there was no use in allowing my admiring follower to guess that.

THE WAY TO MY HEART.

THE way is long and a winding way,
Thickset with briars and flowering thorn ;
Turn not aside from the light of day
To its shades forlorn.

Yet if you dare you may crush and kill
The weeds, and the blossoming brambles part,
And traverse through solitudes lone and still
The way to my heart.

But what if you find when the journey's done,
And the night-wind tosses your locks about,
And the hills are grey, and the pale-tressed sun
Has died, and the stars are out—

That where you might in the days gone by
Have found a palace of love and might,
A heap of ruins upbraid the sky
And the pitiless night ?

D. H. CORNISH.

STEALING A MARCH ON THE COLONEL.

BY CAPTAIN THE HON. R. C. DRUMMOND.

I.



"CAN I do anything for you, Captain Duncombe?" inquired the Colonel, looking up from the defaulters' sheet which lay on the table before him. The prisoners had been disposed of, and Colonel Stewart, C.B., the adjutant, and myself, were the only occupants of the orderly room.

"I want to get away for ten days, sir, if you will kindly give me leave. Captain Browne has agreed to take any duty for which I may be detailed."

Colonel Stewart leaned back in his arm-chair, the long row of war medals which glittered on his breast clashing slightly as he moved.

"It appears to me, Captain Duncombe, that you are always on leave," he observed, stroking his heavy, grey moustache.

"Indeed not, sir; I have been nearly a month at head-quarters without a change."

"Nearly a month," echoed the Colonel: "and without a change, too! That is certainly very hard on you. May I inquire the reason of your present application?"

The old Colonel was altogether too polite; I had evidently "struck" him—as the Yankees say—in a bad vein for my purpose. However, I persevered.

"I can hardly explain the matter, Colonel, but I assure you that this leave is of great importance to me."

"Of great importance, is it?" rejoined my commanding officer; he had an aggravating knack of repeating one's words. "All this means that you find it dull with your regiment, and want to go up to town. I am sorry I cannot grant your request; if you are in want of occupation, I should advise you to study your drill. The employment may have the charm of novelty."

"Then you refuse to give me this leave of absence!" I demanded, in a tone which is only permissible to one voice in the orderly room,

and which caused the adjutant to look up at me with a stare of surprise.

"Decidedly, Captain Duncombe," answered Colonel Stewart, sternly, "and I recommend you, sir, to moderate your tone when you address your commanding officer."

I saluted in silence, and left the orderly room in a frame of mind which neither strong language, nor Scotch whisky tempered with soda-water, was capable of improving.

II.

THAT the reader may sympathise with my feelings of annoyance, I must explain that, some months before, I had acquired by purchase a half share in a thoroughbred race-horse; the remaining portion of the valuable animal being owned by my particular chum, Bobby Lascelles of the 100th Hussars. The horse had not a great reputation when he came into our possession. He had certainly started for a good many races, but had never been within a hundred yards of catching the judge's eye; and, as the state of his wind was more than doubtful, and his pedigree not above suspicion, Bobby and I had bought him at a figure which would almost have been within the compass of a London cab proprietor.

Though Bobby was young, and artless in appearance, he was knowing in horseflesh beyond his years, and moreover was a first-rate performer in the pigskin; so it was agreed between us that he should have sole charge of the thoroughbred, whose name, by the way, we changed from "Lingering Bill" to "Rapidan." Lascelles soon discovered that the horse was pretty clever "across the sticks," and was a useful animal over a country whatever he might be on the flat. He entered and rode him in one or two minor steeplechases, when Rapidan, late Lingering Bill, acquitted himself fairly well considering his want of condition. But the time had now arrived when we proposed to execute a *coup* which we had long been contemplating.

Bobby had hunted our joint property sufficiently often with the Barmington hounds, to obtain the necessary certificate which entitled him to enter the horse in a race "over three miles of a fair hunting country," at the approaching race meeting of the Barmington hunt. But my astute friend had not exactly ridden over the hounds on the occasion when he had appeared on Rapidan in the hunting field. That animal of doubtful pedigree was considered to have no chance for the race in question, and it was certain that long odds would be laid against him. Bobby, however, in his very last letter, had assured me that the thoroughbred's wind would stand the ordeal and that the race was at his mercy, or, as he phrased it, "a dead snip." He also stated that I was on no account to miss attending the meeting, as my

co-operation would be required to work the oracle in the ring, while he bestrode the famous Rapidan.

Now, however, the chance of my leading the winner to the weighing-room had retired to a hundred to one, and, with a heavy heart, I made my way to the telegraph office to send the necessary wire to my partner.

III.

IT was in no very cheerful mood that I obeyed the summons of the mess bugle to dinner that evening. Nor was my temper improved to find, on entering the room, that the only vacant seat at the table was next to Colonel Stewart, who, though a married man, was on this occasion, dining at mess. To do him justice, he seemed quite willing to ignore our little unpleasantness of the morning. But visions of Rapidan "squandering" his field rose before me; I could not forgive my neighbour for hindering my presence at the great event, so treated his well-intentioned efforts at conversation with scant courtesy.

Towards the end of dinner a discussion was started on mesmerism, animal magnetism, and the like subjects, in regard to which my brother officers were, for the most part, profoundly ignorant, which did not, however, prevent them from expressing their opinions with great freedom. But Colonel Stewart was better informed in these matters than his officers, and as he discoursed learnedly of clairvoyance and the mysterious properties of the human will, I suddenly remembered that it was a favourite delusion with our commanding officer that he was himself endowed with unusual powers in this respect.

"By the simple exercise of my will," he was saying, "I can oblige any one of you to carry into effect the thought in my mind,—I do not require to speak a word."

"You should try that on parade, sir," observed Captain Browne, gravely; "a battalion drilling without any words of command would have a very singular effect!"

"And how it would save your voice, Colonel," added Wilson, one of the junior subalterns. "You would have nothing to do but sit on your horse and think!"

"I should like to test the theory with Messrs. Cox, the bankers," remarked Campbell, another youthful lieutenant; "I would 'will' them to let me overdraw as much as I liked."

"In which case, they would soon have to put up the shutters!" said Browne, laughing.

"Chaff away, gentlemen," said the Colonel, somewhat annoyed. "It is all very fine for you boys to laugh at things you don't understand. I only state facts, which I am quite prepared to prove."

"I can readily believe what you tell us, Colonel Stewart," I interposed, in a tone of conviction. "I have often thought you had

remarkable will-power. We must try the experiment when the servants leave the room."

He turned towards me with a gratified air: it was pleasant at last to find someone who believed in him.

"I think you would make a good subject, Duncombe. Will you allow me to make a trial with you?"

I readily agreed to sacrifice myself in the cause of science—and for my private ends—and shortly afterwards was blindfolded and led from the room, while it was decided in my absence what the Colonel should "will" me to do.

On my return Colonel Stewart placed his hands round my waist, and presently I felt a gentle but unmistakable pressure from his muscular fingers. Obeying the impulse, I walked slowly forward, till, on nearing the end of the room, I felt a decided push upon one side; when again taking the hint, I turned to the left and brought up "all standing" against the mahogany sideboard. I paused here, in doubt as to what was required of me. As a first measure, I passed my hands over the surface of the sideboard, but was promptly warned by a slight pinch from behind that I was on the wrong tack. The proverbial pin might have been heard to drop, as, after groping about for some seconds, I seized upon a solitary wine-glass which stood upon the lower shelf of the sideboard; then in obedience to the unmistakable directions conveyed from the rear, I wheeled round, advanced to the dinner-table, and after a moment's hesitation, placed the wine-glass upon it and tore the bandage from my eyes amidst the applause of the unbelieving officers. The Colonel had vindicated the power of his will (or fingers?)—for I had executed my task to the letter!

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Wilson.

"Most remarkable thing I ever saw in my life!" ejaculated Browne.

"Extraordinary force of will!" murmured Campbell.

Seizing my opportunity while the Colonel was still flushed with his triumph: "By the way, sir, about that leave? I should be so much obliged if you would allow me to go away for ten days."

"Certainly, Captain Duncombe, by all means. Arrange it with the adjutant. I know you don't often go on leave, and none of my officers pays more attention to his drill."

And the race? Well, Rapidan romped home in a canter. Bobby Lascelles and I won enough money to set us up for the next year, and great was the rejoicing among certain West End tradesmen.

! ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

AT first sight it would seem hard to trace any illustration of the doctrine of heredity in the case of the master of romance, whose loss all the world mourns. This fanciful realist, this naïve, wistful humorist, this innocent Bohemian, this serious essayist, came on the father's side of a stock of what the world regarded as a quiet, ingenious, demure, practical, home-keeping people.

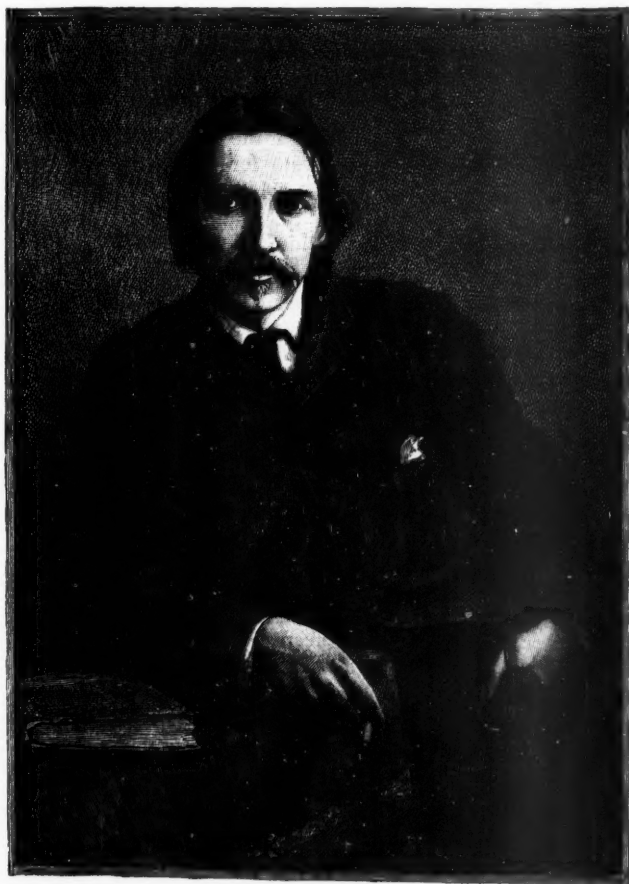
His grandfather, Robert Stevenson, the great lighthouse builder, the man who reared the iron-bound pillar on the destructive Bell Rock, and set life-saving lights there, was very intent on his professional work ; yet he had his ideal and romantic and adventurous side. In the delightful sketch which his famous grandson gave of him, does he not tell of the joy Robert Stevenson had in the annual voyage in the lighthouse yacht—how it was looked forward to, yearned for, and how, when he had Walter Scott on board, his fund of story and reminiscence all through the tour never failed—how Scott drew upon it in 'The Pirate,' and the notes to 'The Pirate,' and with what pride Robert Stevenson preserved the lines Scott wrote in the lighthouse album at the Bell Rock on that occasion, and how, in 1850, the old man, drawing nigh unto death, was with the utmost difficulty dissuaded from going the voyage once more, and was found furtively in his room packing his portmanteau, in spite of the protests of all his family ; and would have gone but for the utter weakness of death.

His father was also a splendid engineer, full of invention, and devoted to his profession ; but he too was not without his romances, and even vagaries. He loved a story, and used to sit at night and spin the most wondrous yarns ; a man of much reserve, yet also of much power in discourse, with a great aptness and felicity in the use of phrases ; "a man," the son says of him, "of somewhat antique strain, and with a blended sternness and softness that was wholly Scottish, and at first sight somewhat bewildering," as "melancholy, and with a keen sense of his unworthiness, yet humorous in company ; shrewd and childish," and it might be added, with all the fancy and pure, beautiful ideality, and in some respects the ingenuousness and freshness of the child.

On the mother's side, he came of ministers. His maternal grandfather, the Rev. Dr. Balfour, of Colinton, was a man of handsome presence, tall, venerable-looking, and not without a mingled authority and humour of his own ; no very great preacher, I have heard, but one who would sometimes bring a smile to the faces of his hearers by very original ways of putting things.

Robert Louis Stevenson was born on November 13th, 1850, the

year of Robert Stevenson's death, and, as a mere child, gave token of his character. The child was father to the man. He was not content with ordinary toys and playthings—wanted to try to make them for himself. As soon as he could read he was keen for books,



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

and before very long had read all the story-books he could lay hands on ; and when the stock ran out he would go and look in at all the shop-windows and try to piece out the stories from bits he read in the open pages and the wood-cuts.

As a mere boy, he tells us, he always carried two books with him

one to read, and one to write in ; for the idea of his destination as a writer had very early arisen upon his mind. His teachers regarded him as an idler with plenty of faculties which he would not apply. He was applying himself well, but not in their way. He was fond of playing truant—declares, indeed, that he was about as methodic a truant as ever could have been. He loved to go on long wanderings by himself on the Pentland Hills, and read about the Covenanters ; and while yet a youth of sixteen he wrote 'The Pentland Rising'—a pamphlet in size, but a piece of fine work—which was duly published, is now scarce, and fetches a high price.

When he went to college it was still the same. He tells in the funniest way how he got a certificate for Greek out of Professor Blackie, though the professor owned "his face was not familiar to him." He fared very differently when afterwards his father, eager that he should follow his profession, got him to enter the civil engineering class under Professor Fleeming Jenkin. He still stuck to his old courses, wandering about, and in sheltered corners, writing in the open air, and was not present in class more than a dozen times. When the session was ended, he went up to try for a certificate. "No, no, Mr. Stevenson," said the professor. "I might give it in a doubtful case, but yours is not doubtful ; you have not kept my classes." And the most characteristic thing—honourable to both men—is to come, for this was the beginning of a friendship which grew and strengthened, and is finely celebrated in the younger man's sketch of the elder.

Meanwhile, Stevenson had been sent to get some practical knowledge of outdoor engineering work at Anstruther in Fife, and at Wick, where a breakwater was being constructed. There, as he tells us, he became very interested in one thing. He saw the divers going down in their dress, and he was very keen to know what the sensations were like in the underworld of waters. He bribed Bob Bain, the diver, with five shillings, to let him put on a diver's dress and go down with him ; and he has finely told in one of his essays what his sensations were, with such pictures for colour and contrast as you shall hardly get elsewhere in so short a compass. But when he had learned what were the sensations under water, and a good deal else of the same kind, his interest in engineering went—his mind full of stories and fancies and human nature. As he had told his mother, he did not care about finding what was "the strain on a bridge" ; he wanted to know something of human beings.

No doubt much to the disappointment of his father, who wished him, as an only son, to carry on the traditions of the family, the engineering was given up, and he consented to study law, and did study it with as much success as enabled him to be called to the Scottish Bar in 1875.

But he never practised. He had chosen his own vocation, which was literature, and the years which followed were, despite the delicacy which showed itself, very busy years. He produced volume on

volume. He had written many stories which had never seen the light; he had met the lady whom he married, and who proved so true a helpmate and aid, sympathising with him fully in his literary projects, and even co-operating with him in some of them. He had made trial of many climates, even gone to America—only to suffer at the hands of ignorant doctors there, as he himself told me; and had returned for a time to Edinburgh in the late summer of 1881.

Just at this time his essay on Thoreau appeared in 'The Cornhill.' He was a little out on some points of fact, and I wrote to the *Spectator* a letter that perhaps laid a little too much importance upon them. This led him to write to me privately, expressing a wish to meet me, and talk over that and other things. To this letter I at once replied to 17, Heriot Row, Edinburgh, saying that I should be in Scotland by-and-by, and that I should be glad to call and see him there. In reply to this letter I received the following:—

"The Cottage, Castleton of Braemar.

"Sunday, August, 1881.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I should long ago have written to thank you for your kind and frank letter; but, in my state of health, papers are apt to get mislaid, and your letter has been vainly hunted for until this (Sunday) morning.

"I regret I shall not be able to see you in Edinburgh; one visit to Edinburgh has already cost me too dear in that invaluable particular, health; but if it should be at all possible to push on as far as Braemar, I believe you would find an attentive listener, and I can offer you a bed, a drive, and necessary food, etc.

"If, however, you should not be able to come thus far, I can promise you two things: first, I shall religiously revise what I have written, and bring out more clearly the point of view from which I regarded Thoreau; second, I shall, in the preface, record your objection.

"The point of view (and I must ask you not to forget that any such short paper is essentially only a *section through* a man) was this—I desired to look at the man through his books. Thus, for instance, when I mentioned his return to the pencil-making, I did it only in passing (perhaps I was wrong), because it seemed to me not an illustration of his principles, but a brave departure from them. Thousands of such there were, I do not doubt, still they might be hardly to my purpose, though, as you say so, some of them would be.

"Our difference as to 'pity,' I suspect, was a logomachy of my making. No pitiful acts on his part would surprise me. I know he would be more pitiful in practice than most of the whiners; but the spirit of that practice would still seem to be unjustly described by the word 'pity.'

"When I try to be measured I find myself usually suspected of a sneaking unkindness for my subject; but you may be sure, sir, I

would give up most other things to be so good a man as Thoreau. Even my knowledge of him leads me thus far.

"Should you find yourself able to push on to Braemar—it may even be on your way—believe me your visit will be most welcome. The weather is cruel, but the place is, as I daresay you know, the very 'wale' of Scotland—bar Tummelside.

"Yours very sincerely,

"ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON."

How characteristic in some points is this letter!

Some delay took place in my leaving London, and hence what seemed a hitch. I wrote mentioning the reason of my delay, and expressing the fear that I might have to forego the prospect of seeing him in Braemar, as his circumstances might have altered in the meantime. In answer came this note, like so many, if not most, of his, without date:—

"The Cottage, Castleton of Braemar.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am here as yet a fixture, and beg you to come our way. Would Tuesday or Wednesday suit you by any chance? We shall then, I believe, be empty—a thing favourable for talks. You get here in time for dinner. I stay till September is out, unless, as may very well be, the weather drive me forth.

"Yours very sincerely,

"R. L. STEVENSON."

I accordingly did go to Braemar, and for a little I was one in a delightful circle, where rare freedom was found, yet where rarest courtesy was practised. His wife and her son by a former marriage were also staying there with his father and mother. These were red-letter days in my calendar, alike on account of pleasant intercourse with his honoured father and himself. I threw down a little pen-portrait of Stevenson then, and fear I could hardly better it by elaboration. Here it is:—

"Not so tall, probably, as he seems at first from his *thinness*, the pose and air could not be otherwise described than as distinguished. Head of fine type, carried well on the shoulders, and in walking with the impression of being a little thrown back; long brown hair falling from under a broadish-brimmed Spanish form of soft felt hat, Rembrandtesque; loose kind of Inverness cape when walking, and invariable velvet jacket when inside the house. Face sensitive, full of expression, longish—especially when seen in profile; features a little irregular; brow high and broad. A hint of vagary, and just a hint in the expression, qualified by the eyes, frank and clear, but piercing, yet rest clearly on you with a kind of gentle radiance and animation as he speaks. Romance, if with a *souffron* of whimsicality,

is marked on him—sometimes he has a look as of the Ancient Mariner, and would fix you with his glittering eye, as he points his sentences with a nervous movement of his thin white forefinger, even when it holds the incessant cigarette. Faint suggestion of a hare-brained sentimental trace on his countenance, though controlled by Scotch sense and shrewdness. A favourite and characteristic attitude with him was to put his foot on a chair or stool and rest his elbow on his knee with his chin on his hand, as he listened; and to sit, or rather half sit, half lean, on the corner of a table or desk, one of his legs swinging freely, and when anything that tickled him was said, he would laugh in the heartiest manner, despite the risk of exciting his cough, which then much troubled him."



BRAEMAR.

"In the mornings before Louis was able to face the brisk air of the hills, I had many walks with his father. . . ."

And then the picture gallery! This was the room devoted to Sam Lloyd Osbourne, his stepson, where we wrote and drew and painted—its walls covered with the most extravagant and grotesquely funny bits of work. On first entering it, I was putting some constraint on myself to restrain a laugh, when Stevenson, with his usual quickness, noting this, said, with a sly wink and a gentle dig in the ribs—"It's laugh and be thankful here." On Lloyd's account, simple engraving materials, types, and a printing-press had been procured, and books of the oddest character were produced—all the family having more or less a hand in them. It was Stevenson's delight to

work for hours together here with Lloyd, becoming a boy himself for the nonce. He drew and coloured a map, which he called "Treasure Island," and out of this grew the famous story. He had written the greater half of it when I went; and a chapter or so was read in the family circle every day, his father becoming deeply interested in it.

Delightfully suggestive and highly enjoyable were the meetings in the little drawing-room after dinner, when the contrasted traits of father and son came fully into play, when Louis would sometimes draw out a new view of things by bold, half-paradoxical assertion, or compel advance on the point from a new quarter by a question casuistically couched, or reveal his own latent conviction finally by a few sentences as neatly-rounded as though they had been written, while he rose and gently moved about as his habit was in the course of these more extended remarks. The greatest treat of all was the reading of the 'Sea-Cook.' It is one thing to read the printed page; it was quite another to hear Stevenson as he stood reading it aloud, with his hand stretched out, and his body gently swaying as a kind of rhythmical commentary. Mr. Stevenson, in his article in 'My First Book,' has told the whole story; how I carried off with me the first half of it and showed it to my friend Mr. James Henderson, who also was much taken with it, and published it in *Young Folks*.

In the mornings, before Louis was able to face the brisk air of the hills, I had many walks with his father, and many delightful talks, for he was interested in many things, and had had his own trials and questionings in doctrinal matters, on which I could fully meet him. On my leaving he presented me, just as I started by coach, with a little volume wrapped in paper, which turned out to be a little work of his on Biblical difficulties, and with some notes and marks in it. In a letter dated September, 1881, R. L. S. wrote:—

"MY DEAR DR. JAPP:—My father has gone, but I think I may take it upon me to ask you to keep the book. Of all things you could do to endear yourself to me you have done the best, for my father and you have taken a fancy to each other. . . .

"I do not know how to thank you for all your kind trouble in the matter of the 'Sea-Cook,' but I am not unmindful. My health is still poorly, and I have added intercostal rheumatism—a new attraction—which sewed me up nearly double for two days, and still gives me a list to starboard—let us be ever nautical!

"I do not think, with the start I have, there will be any difficulty in letting Mr. Henderson go ahead whenever he likes. I will write my story up to its legitimate conclusion, and then we shall be in a position to judge whether a sequel would be desirable, and I would then myself know better about its practicability from the story-teller's point of view.

"Yours ever very sincerely,

"R. L. STEVENSON."

A little later came the following :—

"MY DEAR DR. JAPP,—Herewith go *IX*, chapters. I have been a little seedy ; and the two last that I have written seem to me on a false venue ; hence the smallness of the batch. I have now, I hope, turned the corner, where the hitch was, with no too great amount of dullness. . . .

"The map with all its names, notes, and soundings should make, I believe, an admirable advertisement for the story, eh ?

"I hope you got a telegram and letter I forwarded after you to Dinnat.

"Believe me, ever yours sincerely,

"R. L. STEVENSON."

By-and-by Stevenson left for Davos-Platz, from which I heard now and then. Here is one letter :—

"Chalet Buol, Davos. (No date.)

"MY DEAR DR. JAPP,—You must think me a forgetful rogue, as indeed I am, for I have but now told my publisher to send you a copy of the 'Familiar Studies.' However, I own I have delayed this letter till I could send you the enclosed. Remembering the nights at Braemar when we visited the Picture Gallery, I hoped they might amuse you. You see we do some publishing here away.

"I shall hope to see you in town in May.

"Always yours faithfully,

"ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON."

The enclosed were 'Black Canyon ; or, Adventures in the Far West. By Samuel L. Osbourne. Illustrated. Printed by the author. Davos-Platz ;' and 'Moral Emblems by R. L. Stevenson,' also printed by Samuel L. Osbourne. Quaint little booklets, with a sprawling kind of genius and real humour in them. Here are the lines to a rare piece of grotesque titled "A Poet in Darien."

Broad-gazing on untrodden lands,
See where adventurous Cortez stands,
While in the heavens above his head
The eagle seeks its daily bread.
How aptly fact to fact replies,
Heroes and eagles, hills and skies,
Ye who condemn the fatted slave,
Look on this emblem and be brave.

Another, "The Elephant," has these lines :

See in the print how, moved by whim,
Trumpeting Jumbo, great and grim,
Adjusts his trunk, like a cravat
To noose that individual's hat :
The sacred Ibis in the distance,
Joys to observe his brave resistance.

The following letter will yet further throw light on the "Emblems" as well as some other things—"Familiar Studies" especially.

"Chalet Buol, Davos. *April 1st, 1882.*

"MY DEAR DR. JAPP,—A good day to date this letter, which is, in fact, a confession of incapacity. During my wife's wretched illness—or I should say the worst of it, for she is not yet rightly well—I somewhat lost my head, and entirely lost a great quire of corrected proofs. This is one of the results; I hope there are none more serious. I was never so sick of any volume as I was of that; I was continually receiving fresh proofs with fresh infinitesimal difficulties. I was ill—I did really fear my wife was worse than ill. Well, it's out now, and though I have observed several carelessnesses myself, and now here's another of your finding,* of which indeed I ought to be ashamed, it will only justify the sweeping humility of the Preface.

"Symonds was actually dining with us when your letter came, and I communicated your remarks. . . . He is a far better and more interesting thing than any of his books.

"The Elephant was my wife's, so she is proportionately elate that you should have picked it out for praise—from a collection, let me add, so replete with the highest qualities of art.



“THE ELEPHANT WAS MY WIFE’S.”

"My wicked carcass, as John Knox calls it, holds together wonderfully. In addition to many other things, and a volume of travel, I find I have written since December 90 'Cornhill' pp. of magazine work—essays and stories; 40,000 words, and I am none

* I cannot now remember what this was.—A. H. J.

the worse—I am the better. I begin to hope I may, if not outlive this wolverine upon my shoulders, at least carry him bravely, like Symonds and Alexander Pope. I begin to take a pride in that hope.

"I shall be much interested to see your criticisms. You might perhaps send them to me. I believe you know that is not dangerous—one folly I have not—I am not touchy under criticism.

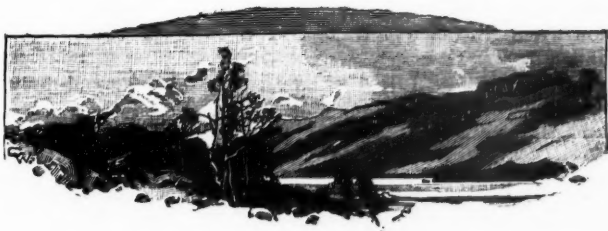
"Sam and my wife both beg to be remembered, and Sam sends as a present a work of his own. I hope you feel flattered, for this is *simply the first time he has ever given one away*. I have to buy my own works, I can tell you.

"Yours very sincerely,

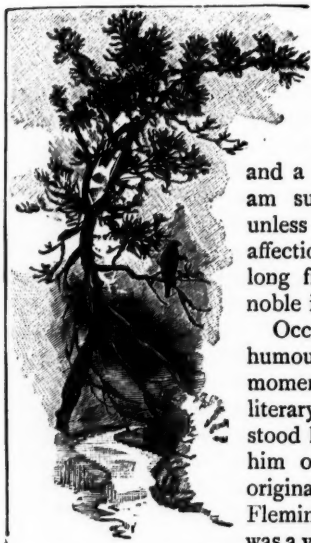
"ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON."

How pleasant were it to go on! But space forbids. The reader cannot but have caught from these letters some notes of character—the unaffected generosity, the courage, the humour shining so triumphantly through pain, the true manliness and largeness of the man. As the writer, what variety of chords he has touched, and all to fine issues! Whether he writes in his own proper person, or makes another his mouthpiece, we have closeness, clearness, words made to express the exact shade of meaning—in the former case polished phrases finely drawn, in the other every term made an immediate mirror of the character. With ordinary types, or with those in whom *outré* and metaphysical moods and thoughts prevail, he was equally at home; a rare refinement and largeness of feeling and sympathy went together in him; a master of the literary spirit as well as of literary form. We shall miss him much and long, and we must mourn that time was hardly given for so large a promise to be fulfilled in full.

ALEXANDER H. JAPP, LL.D.



THE PLAYWRIGHT'S LOVE STORY.



I REALLY cannot tell what it was that first drew me towards the young fellow. There was something magnetic about him. He had a pale, earnest, thoughtful face, a chivalrous regard for women, a clean conscience, and a tongue which was void of offence. I am sure he never made a woman blush, unless it was by a declaration of his honest affection for her, and at the opening of our long friendship, I feel sure that he was as noble in mind as he was handsome in feature.

Occasionally he would drop into a cynical humour, but it would not last long. In such moments he would describe himself as "a literary man in self-defence," by which I understood him to mean that ill-health had robbed him of his power to make a living in his original profession—that of the bar. But Joe Fleming was a bright fellow, and I fancy his life was a very happy one. With him literature was

not merely a question of cheques. There were nobler and more enduring rewards, and, I believe, his first ambition was to secure these first, leaving the cheques to come pottering in afterwards. I am sure the use of that word "pottering" will convince discriminating readers that I am not a literary man. I was going to express my thankfulness for this, but, perhaps, I had better hesitate. At any rate, at the time I am writing of, a prosaic business paid me a good deal better than my friend's scribbling, and it was my pleasure to help him occasionally, both with advice and a little of something more substantial.

But in this respect I had to be very careful. Though he was as poor as the proverbial church mouse, he was as proud as Lucifer. Poverty and pride and budding literature seem to go together. Perhaps it is right that they should—that the race of sycophantic authors, who bent at the feet of titled and wealthy patrons, has become a class to be forgotten.

But I had one way of helping him without humiliating him. I was partner in a firm of shipowners, and, being anxious about his health, I induced him to winter abroad, telling him that some day lovers of true literature would be proud of him, and that, consequently

it was his duty to preserve his health and freshness of intellect until the days when a laggard world would be ready for him.

Well, he went. He came back just as the country was bursting into the glory of spring. His first call was upon me.

He was full of gratitude. And so was I, for I saw by his face that his health had greatly improved.

"Better, Joe?" I asked anxiously.

"Oh, yes," he answered; and there was pathos in his tone. "Yes, much better, though I have been burning the candle at both ends."

"Working?" I asked laconically.

"Yes."

"Something good—really good?"

"Need you ask—you that have faith in me?" he replied with gentle reproach.

"I asked so as to test your own estimate of the work. I'll give you a cheque to publish it, if you like."

"My friend, no. It is sold."

"I am delighted. I told you the world would recognise you. What is it—a novel, a poem, a book of travel, a play?"

"Wait."

There the subject dropped. Two months passed. Then he came again, looking somewhat pale and anxious. I had seen little of him in the interval. Once or twice I had taken him to the theatre. It gave me pleasure to do this, for it was a joy to see his eyes feasting upon the beauties of a great play; it was refreshing to watch him as he followed every development of the drama.

"I would love you as my own son," I said to him one night, as we sat and listened to a play which particularly appealed to me, "if you would only let me adopt you."

"I am afraid you will have to seek a son elsewhere, if that is the only condition upon which I can attain to that honour," he replied seriously.

"Nonsense. Let your mind mature for a few years, and then nothing will be impossible to you. You would more than repay all my thought and care."

As he walked from the theatre that night he committed to me the great secret of his life.

"Beresford, I'm in love," he said very simply.

There was a pause.

"You are laughing at me," he added.

"No; but I am sorry for you."

"Are you sorry because I am happy at last?" he asked, and the old gentle reproach was in his voice again.

"Not that, my boy; but what have you to maintain your happiness on?"

"Nothing but love and hope and a few bits of paper, I

suppose," he replied. "But she has faith in me, and that is worth a fortune."

"Rather flimsy things to keep a house on," I suggested. "But promise me one thing. Do not act rashly. You have a career before you. Don't spoil it before it is made."

We were shaking hands for the night.

"Will you come with me to the theatre next week?" he asked.

"Yes, with pleasure. What is on?"

"The play is immaterial. Something by a new and unknown man. But *she* is taking a part in it, and that is everything to me."

To me the week passed rapidly, and, on the appointed night, we sat in the stalls. He insisted upon paying this time, and I would not deny him the pleasure on which he was bent. He was particularly quiet, almost moody, as he sat by my side. He hardly spoke. But from the moment the curtain was raised his eyes blazed on the stage. I watched him. I tried to read the secret of his love in those burning eyes of his. I wanted to learn which of the actresses he had given his love to. My success in this direction was not conspicuous. At the end of the first act I was still in the dark.

The play opened very prettily, charmingly. Before the first act had been concluded I could see that the play was a great one. A new playwright had burst into the dazzling firmament. When the curtain fell upon the first act my heart was throbbing. I had caught something of the nobility of the drama, and was longing, resolving, to be a better man than I had ever been before; trying, almost blindly, to clutch something of the inspiring happiness of the hero and heroine who had played their little hour before me.

The applause which greeted the descent of the curtain seemed to startle my poor friend.

"Is it any good?" he asked.

"Any good?" I replied, almost scorning such a question. "Why, it's great, it's noble. It has brought my life before me as nothing else ever did. Listen, Joe. Even you do not know all my life. I thought I had buried everything that could bring happiness to me, but this has opened my eyes, brought a fresh revelation to me. Joe, if I had a daughter like that I would give her everything that love and money could purchase. Now, I have confessed to you; confess to me. Which is your lady-love?"

He turned from me suddenly, almost brusquely.

"Come upstairs and let us take coffee," he said.

We went up into the crush room. Not a word would he say about the play, not a word about his love. I could see that he was on the stretch, and I certainly was. That coffee was hardly a success from a social point of view. I was glad when the bell rang and brought us back to our seats.

The first act of the new drama had been noble, but the second was almost sublime. I am not a professional critic; but as I listened to

the developments of a noble play I desired nothing more dearly than to shake hands with the man who could awaken life and emotion as he had done.

I could see that the heroine was inspired, simply this and nothing more. She was not acting, she was living her part as though her life depended upon it. She was clothed in pure white satin, which admirably suited her refined beauty; she was walking dangerously near a moral precipice, but she walked so nobly, so purely, so loftily, so sweetly.

The third act led up to a thrilling, ennobling climax. The crowded house was wrapped in silence; but when the curtain slowly descended a tremendous volume of cheering burst from the hearts of the excited audience. I looked around the crowded house. Everyone seemed to be cheering with delight. But I could not cheer. I sat like the sphinx; nay, hardly like the sphinx, for that has no heart. But I sat in silence. I could not cheer. My feelings were too deep for applause. I was laying my heart at the feet of the beautiful heroine who had thrown her life into the part. It was not the heart of a lover that I was thus offering to her as homage, but the heart which an old and honourable man lays at the feet of a daughter who is precious to him beyond the meaning of words.

I turned towards my friend. He was wiping tears from his eyes, and seemed strangely moved. There was a flash in his eyes as he saw the leading actor and the beautiful heroine appear at the footlights to respond to the ever-increasing roar of applause. Time after time they reappeared, and then the tune was changed.

"Author! Author!" rang from every portion of the great building!

"Author! Author!" the cry was repeated.

My friend sat like a Stoic now. A frown was on his face. He was trembling. He looked so pitiable that once I was inclined to laugh at him, but I was restrained by the thought that my feelings were not well under control. I was longing to see the unknown author. When he appeared, I thought I would pull myself together, and cheer with all the lusty energy of an old fellow who glories in the triumphs of youth.

"Author! Author!" the cry went up again, louder than before!

Again I turned. My friend had disappeared. I felt that he had gone to have a private interview with the lady who had bewitched him, and grumbled at his lack of courtesy in leaving me without wishing me good-night.

"Author! Author!" the cry went up again, and this time there was an impatient tone in it.

I had turned away again to look for my friend, but a tremendous roar of applause startled me. I turned back. My friend was before the footlights. Holding one of his hands was the heroine, holding the other was the hero. I knew he needed this support. I could see that he trembled in every limb. He looked ghastly pale, but there

was a gloriously proud look in his eyes which seemed to turn his quiet evening clothes into brilliant vestments.

It was a triumph to him ; it was a triumph to me, for I had faith in him when no one else had.

After the curtain had descended another drama was quickly played. I did not see it. It was a drama in miniature. It was played within one of the wings.

The trembling youth threw his arms around the beautiful heroine, and cried, " Oh ! Ethel, my darling, you have saved my life and made my reputation."

" No, Joe, your play has made its own reputation and mine also, and it has made my life so happy."

Hurriedly, happily they left the glare and the glitter. I met them at the stage door.

" My boy," I said. I held his hand and tried to say more, but could not. He was too happy to speak, but at last he said—

" Beresford, this is my promised wife."

I started again. She was the lovely heroine. I took her hand and looked into her glittering eyes.

" My dear," I said, " henceforth you must be my daughter. Joe is my son ; he will not deny me in his hour of triumph, his dawn of wealth, what he was too proud to accept in his days of poverty. But that is all over for him. A new and brilliant life has begun."

Well, there was nothing more to be said. I think we were glad to part. Our hearts were too full for commonplace compliments, and I could only hope that two who had evidently been joined together by the Highest for the accomplishment of the noblest would be perfectly happy.

My hope has been fully realised.



PASSED—WITH HONOURS.

BY CHRISTIAN BURKE.

SOME hundred and odd miles from London there stands a peaceful cathedral city. It is a quiet, old-world place, with narrow rambling streets, and solid, comfortable roomy houses, shut within their pleasant gardens, on its outskirts. In itself it is scarcely picturesque enough to delay the passing tourist, its great attraction being its splendid "House of God," standing in its midst like a magnificent jewel in a rough setting. In the wake of the precincts runs a sleepy old river, and along the banks of it, by a narrow footpath, one can get out into the country, with its stretches of fertile meadow-land spreading for miles and miles away.

It was the time of the Trinity Ordinations; Easter had fallen at its earliest that year, and all the ecclesiastical gardens were still gay with spring flowers. The city itself was unwontedly lively. Its favourite canon was in residence, and its still more beloved bishop was at home after a somewhat lengthy absence. The narrow High Street was thronged with a student population and with the friends thereof—fathers and mothers and sisters for the most part, who had come to see their dear ones take upon them the solemn vows of their Order, and to wish the lads "God-speed" in their new and holy calling. Birds of passage all these, but the old town liked anything that stirred not too rudely its habitual slumbers, and made them very kindly welcome within its boundaries.

The dreaded period of the examinations was just over, and though the formal lists were not yet out, it was pretty well known with all but mathematical certainty who were likely to have done well, and who, alas! had failed. Pending official declarations, the candidates, successful or otherwise, were in fairly good spirits, the unlucky ones not too hopelessly crushed; while those who felt they had passed safely through the ordeal were much absorbed in meeting and quartering their rapidly arriving friends, and doing the honours of the place to their "people."

Very various were the types of faces passing along the streets. Here a lad, the centre of a proud family group, there a solitary wanderer, who had neither friends nor associates to share his triumph or failure. Now the boyish face and bright blue eyes of some young fellow up for deacon's orders, still with the charm of boyhood clinging about him, though he would nearly have died of grief had he been told so. There a young curate in the correctest of clerical garb, with

a couple of girl sisters hanging on his arm, who saw in him one of the coming lights of the nineteenth century church.

Outside the town the soft May sunlight was lighting up the cathedral meadows and turning to a golden flood the drowsy river rippling lazily along between its grassy banks, so slow and calm in its scarcely perceptible motion that it was difficult to believe how it could rage and swell with royal anger in the winter, spreading out like a lake over the frost-bitten fields and working endless havoc in the canons' gardens.

It was a perfect evening, one of those days that seem to be dropped down to us straight out of heaven; yet to Austin Selby, pacing along by his companion's side in the narrow pathway by the river, it was one of the hardest days in a life that had hitherto known more of trouble than of pleasure.

They made a strange contrast, these two; the learned and world-renowned bishop and the unknown rejected candidate; and indeed it was with equal surprise that they found themselves in each other's company. But the bishop taking his afternoon walk, and thinking over his next theological treatise, and the young man striving to fight out his battle with disappointment and despair, had accidentally, as our faithless phrase goes, encountered each other, and somehow found themselves drawn into conversation.

The bishop was not a man given to standing upon ceremony. With all the stately dignity which he knew so well how to assume on occasion, in the ordinary affairs of life he was apt to act abruptly and on the impulse of the moment; and there were those who found in his very unconventionality his chiefest charm. In the present instance one glance from the keen old eyes into those troubled young ones had been sufficient to make him forget his beloved treatise for the moment, and to set him to work to find some balm for the intolerable hurt, and that with the tender skill which made him so truly to all his clergy a "Father in God."

His companion was no match for his cleverness, and, bit by bit, the narrator scarcely knowing how much of himself or his history he was revealing, the bishop got at the whole story, and found therein much food for meditation.

Austin Selby was the son of a poor country clergyman, and all his life had known what it was to live in the midst of a perpetual struggle to make ends meet. That his son should follow his own calling had been the one ambition of his father's life; and in the boy himself it was an inborn vocation to which he turned with all the wistful ambitions of youth.

To this end, with incredible struggles and self-sacrifice, Mr. Selby had succeeded in sending his son to college; but during his first year the great financial crash came, involving the Selbys with so many others in worldly ruin, and in their case bringing death and desolation in its train. Philip Selby never recovered the overthrow of his hopes,

and died of what we are sometimes sceptically inclined to call an "impossible" complaint, but which is none the less a sad reality—a broken heart. And his son found himself at barely twenty at the end of his career, with all his hopes and dreams fading into nothingness, and with an ailing mother and several younger brothers and sisters who looked to him alone for support and protection.

As he turned his back on his college for the last time, Selby knew something of the meaning of the bitterness of life, although he was but little more than a boy.

Fortunately, neither he nor his sister Patience, who was a year or two his senior, had much time to think about themselves in the innumerable and pressing claims that came upon them. A distant relative offered the young man a post in his bank; the appointment was fairly well paid, and he accepted it with thankfulness, and in due course tried to settle down and to forget his old dreams of wider life and more definite service in the intricacies of the business which he detested, yet strove so loyally to do well.

After a while the struggle grew easier, he had a curious feeling at times as if he had lost a limb or a sense, and should go through life in consequence maimed or dumb; but he strove to put the past into the background, and no one seeing him, if grave yet uniformly cheerful and unselfish, could have guessed what he had gone through; no one except his elder sister, to whom he was all in all.

To Patience Selby the knowledge of her brother's sacrifice was more than she could bear.

The little money that had been rescued from their late disasters he insisted on settling on his mother and sisters, refusing almost angrily their entreaties that he should take it and finish his college course. His mother grieved silently, but Patience would not give up hope, and began to plot and plan against her brother's peace. She would not let him do this thing. Herself a clever musician, and well-known in their own neighbourhood, she had soon more work and pupils than she could well undertake, and she began to save diligently.

One day when Austin had laughingly accused her of becoming a regular miser, she unfolded to him her plan, of which she had as yet dared to speak to no one. This was no less than that in the course of a year or two he should take their mutual savings, go through a theological college, getting if not the best training, the best that could be had, and thus finally realise their great ambition and enter the priesthood.

At first he would not hear of it, but she would give him no rest, and the old hopes came back with a rush at the first glimpse of a possibility, oversweeping all their strongholds of opposition. To both it meant years of stinting and hard work, during which it was Patience who kept a fearless heart and would hear no word of giving up when her brother shrank from involving her in the necessary sacrifices,

They accomplished their end at last, although Selby was nearly six-and-twenty before the requisite means were within their grasp. Everything looked bright and hopeful, a tiny unexpected legacy had smoothed matters at home, an old friend of his father's had offered to take the young man as his deacon as soon as he was ordained, while his kinsman at the bank was so far touched by the efforts of the two young people—though he looked upon their wishes as utter folly—that he promised to take Austin back into the bank on the unheard-of possibility of his failing. "For it's as well to have two strings to your bow, with a young family like yours at your heels," he said, somewhat grimly, "in case you shouldn't prove the genius that Patience thinks you."

And the ex-clerk acquiesced ruefully and was grateful, though he hoped with all his might that he had done with cash-books and ledgers for ever!

For a time all went well, but towards the end of his term things began to look blacker. Never very strong, an inopportune attack of illness threw him back and broke in upon his time. He began to work too soon, and worked too hard, got over-strained and anxious, found his brains cloudy and confused, yet dared not give himself the much needed rest.

As a natural consequence, when the examination actually came memory played him false, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he kept his attention concentrated on his papers. Such was the strain of excitement upon him that he held out through the weary hours, forcing his aching brains to respond to the pressure put upon them; yet when it was all over there fell on him the unbearable consciousness of failure, the deep-rooted conviction that he had done not his best but his worst, and as he walked from the lecture room like a man in a dream, he overheard the fatal words spoken by the examining chaplain to a brother clergyman, "Poor Selby! he looks ill; worked too hard, I expect; at any rate, *he's done for*," and therein he found that his best fears were realised.

He had escaped as best he could from his companions, and turning his back on the town with a wild longing for the peace and quiet of the country, he had tramped along through the tranquil meadows, going over it all till his brain reeled and his lagging feet felt almost as heavy as his heart.

For to him it meant absolute failure. Other men might try again, but for him there could be no second opportunity. Not for anything on earth would he let his sister spend her strength for him again, and for what he could spare himself, there were now a hundred pressing needs. The boys were growing up, their education demanded all that he could give them, and they at least should not start handicapped in the race of life if he could help it. No, it must be given up once and for all. He had tried his best; he knew that; but he had not been accounted worthy. He must go back to the dreary bank-books and

ledgers. And poor Patience, who had hoped such great things—how should he tell her? And then the iron entered his very soul.

It was at this juncture that he had met his bishop, and almost against his will was drawn into conversation with him.

It may perhaps seem curious that at this crisis the personality of his confidant had scarcely any weight with him, and yet under the circumstances his action was perfectly natural, even characteristic. He accepted the matter as settled with an irrevocable finality. The idea that his questioner had any ulterior motive, or that he himself might be suspected of an attempt to plead his own cause, was one that would have been not merely abhorrent but impossible to him from the very simplicity of an essentially simple and straightforward nature.

He was not in a state to reason calmly about anything. He was in that curious stage of over-wroughtness, mental and physical, when even the most reserved can be made to open the doors of their hearts; his defences were down, and he could not but respond to the touch of human kindness which bridged over the chasm of age and position and set the two men for the moment side by side. It was the man himself in his unfeigned sympathy, not the great bishop and his recent judge who won his confidence; and as has been said he was ill-matched in his present frame of mind with his wily interlocutor, who beguiled his secrets from him without his realising how much he had revealed.

Lamely and prosaically enough as it seemed to him he told his story, in answer to the stream of questions to which reverence for the questioner added the force of a command. And when he had got at the kernel of the matter the shrewd ecclesiastic, who was a student of men as well as of books, fixed his piercing eyes on the troubled young face as if he would read him through and through. It was in truth a frank and earnest face, though it was clouded enough just now; not handsome or striking in any way, yet the honest grey eyes looked fearlessly on the world, and there was a certain ineffaceable look of truth and goodness about it that inspired unquestioning trust.

Colouring in spite of himself beneath that sharp scrutiny Selby was startled by hearing his companion say:

"Well, Mr. Selby, are you quite sure that this must be your last chance? Have you no friend who could give you the money for another year's study? My chaplain tells me your work shows promise. Another time you would be sure to succeed. In fact, I think I know of some one, a friend indeed of my own, who would give—well, not give—lend you the necessary means, and you could repay him again at your leisure."

The young man started, the colour flashed into his face and the light into his eyes, and then as swiftly died away leaving him very pale.

"Your lordship is very good," he said slowly; "indeed I am more than grateful; but it is impossible, quite impossible. I am not

clever, I might not succeed, and I dare not start in my career with a debt which for all I can see I might be years discharging, if I could ever do so. Besides which there is no time for me now; I have strained things to the uttermost already. I have others depending on me, and their claims cannot any longer be put aside. No; I have thought it all out, and I am sure that this is, and ought to be final."

"And yet it is no light thing to give up the service of God, Mr. Selby," said the bishop with one of his sudden questioning glances.

"I hope I shall never do that," answered his companion simply. "Surely He has some work left even for laymen! and surely, before all things ought one not to serve Him with clean hands? I could not do this if I began by doing what I know to be wrong."

Again the other began to speak, but Selby put out his hands with a pleading gesture.

"It is more than good of you to have listened to me, sir," he said, "but for pity sake do not, I entreat you, ask me to go over it again. You do not, you cannot know all that stands in the way. I am not myself this afternoon, I dare not trust myself—it would take so little—and no one can judge but I of my duty—to make me go wrong!"

The bishop laid his hand kindly on his companion's arm. "I will not ask you," he said; "nay, more, I believe you are right, and I respect your decision. One thing I am sure of, Mr. Selby, that wherever you are and whatever you do, the Master we both seek to honour will find in you a very faithful servant."

Then, with a sudden dismissing of the subject, he set himself to talk with that fascination which was one of his special gifts, compelling the younger man's thoughts into other channels, so that the walk ended cheerfully enough. When the oddly assorted pair parted near the Cathedral gates, and Selby began to stammer out his thanks, the bishop cut him short, saying cheerily:

"Well, I may see you again before you go. At any rate, go home now and eat and get to bed and to sleep. You young folks are so fond of taking your troubles by wholesale; when you are as old as I am you will be wiser. Perhaps—I don't know—I may have time for a word with you to-morrow."

He waved his hand and departed with a tranquil smile, while Selby, much mystified, and a little disconcerted by this apparently somewhat uncalled-for cheerfulness, returned to his lodgings and wrote a long letter to his sister. When it was done he tore it up, growling at himself for an egotistical brute for burdening her with the first sharpness of his trouble, decided to wait till the morrow and cooler thoughts, and finally took the bishop's advice, stumbled into bed and slept from sheer weariness.

It was after dinner and the bishop was in his library with his

examining chaplain opposite to him, talking over the various candidates. A bright wood fire flickered in the wide old-fashioned grate, but the French windows looking towards the Cathedral were open, and the lamps at the further end of the room were lighted. Outside, a "young May moon" was pouring a flood of silver over the massive towers and making a white pathway across the river.

The bishop sat in his big arm-chair with his coffee-cup in his hand, while the chaplain occupied the stiffest and most uncomfortable seat he could find, and listened to his bishop with respectful disapproval. The latter had been telling the story of his afternoon walk, and it had gained not lost in pathos from his graphic recapitulation. Dr. Fraser was hard-headed and despised emotion, but he was stirred in spite of himself, yet he was angry enough all the same.

"And the long and the short of it is——" he began.

"The long and the short of it is," interrupted his chief, "that you must look over Selby's papers again—indeed, I will have a look at them myself."

"And Brabazon-Smith, and Oxley, and Welby!" said the other with an impatient laugh; "you must treat them all alike!"

"Brabazon-Smith is a conceited youngster, it will do him all the good in the world to fail him," was the reply. "Oxley has been idle, I know. He can just try again, and as for Welby, I hear things of him I don't like. I don't know if I could have accepted him, even if his work had been good, and, as you know quite well, it was infamous. This Selby is another sort of man."

The chaplain was also an old friend, and he did not scruple to grumble freely as he unearthed the unfortunate papers, and a hot discussion followed, which was finally ended by the bishop saying:

"I don't care—they are inaccurate here and there, and he hasn't done enough, but they show talent; flashes of something more than talent, in fact, and earnestness of purpose. Besides, there is the fellow himself. I don't want men with brains only in my diocese. I want heart and character, and trifles like those when I can get them. It's no use fighting against fate, Fraser; *you've got to scrape him through!*"

"Well, of course it's within your lordship's discretion," returned the chaplain, doubling up the papers with an air of ostentatious resignation. "But I must say it is irregular; *highly* irregular."

If the proverbial thunderbolt had fallen at his feet Austin Selby could not have been more astonished than when he received Dr. Fraser's letter as he was lingering over his breakfast on the following morning, deferring the evil moment when he must pack his portmanteau and make ready for his departure.

"Although your papers are not altogether up to the requisite standard of merit," wrote the chaplain, "his lordship considers that they yet show evidence of intelligence and industry, and this, coupled with his personal knowledge of you and of your somewhat peculiar

circumstances, has determined him to give you the benefit of a pass. From what the bishop has told me about you," finished the worthy examiner, determined to speak a word in season, if no one else would, before this young fellow's head should be irrevocably turned—"I do not think you are the kind of man either to forget or to presume on his lordship's undoubted leniency."

It is impossible to describe the revulsion from despair to hope, from disbelief to realisation that swept through Selby's mind when at last he succeeded in convincing himself that it was a fact and no delusive dream that had once more changed for him all the horizon. Patience received a very different epistle from that which had been composed for her the night before, and which filled her faithful heart with measureless joy and pride; while the good bishop laid aside as something worth keeping, an ear of corn amid his often fruitless gleanings, the letter which the young man wrote to him in the first flush of his happiness, before he had had time to cool down and shrink back into his shell again.

The cathedral was very full on that pleasant Trinity Sunday, and the dean preached a most eloquent sermon, of which it is to be feared that Selby scarcely heard a word, so absorbed was he in wonder and thankfulness at finding himself there at all. Yet the bishop, watching his face, saw the soul shining out of those now untroubled eyes, and said to himself again that he had done well.

Nor did the after-life of Austin Selby invalidate his judgment or disappoint his hopes. It was a life growing unconsciously great through the power of an absolute self-sacrifice and tireless devotion; a life the full beauty of which will never be known until the worker himself shall have passed away to fields of wider labour. Some years later Selby was called upon to preach in the cathedral of his ordination. He had already made something of a name as a powerful and eloquent preacher, though he clung too closely to his work in a little out-of-the-way East-end parish ever to become fashionable. That evening, at the bishop's table, one who knew him well was describing his ceaseless labours in the waste places he was striving to redeem, aided and encouraged in all his efforts by the sister who had done so much for him.

"And to think of the jugglery we had to practice to get his papers through," sighed Dr. Fraser, as if the memory of that irregularity weighed upon him still.

"You had, you mean," retorted the bishop, with a twinkle of his eye—"for I had previously put him through a most difficult examination, *viva voce*, and I consider that he *passed—with Honours*."

A STRANGE PEOPLE.

IN the district of Rustenburg, Transvaal, there is a wide plain, dreary and forlorn, overgrown with tall grass and seemingly uninhabited. It is an unpleasant tract of country ; the climate malarial, the air oppressive. The whole thing looks sickly and sad.

About half-past four one bright afternoon we, a party of six young men, were slowly travelling across this plain on our way north. The waggon was making slow work of it, for the peat clogged the wheels. I had fallen behind the others with a friend, engaged in deep conversation ; we had not observed that we were being left far in the rear.

My companion was a Transvaaler of the district, an experienced hunter, very intelligent and observant. Every insect or animal called forth some original remark ; every flower, however insignificant, did he know and discuss ; every sound did his keen ear catch. It was a pleasure and privilege to be in his company, especially as the country was strange to me, and I had always been attracted by nature.

As we were going quietly forward, I suddenly saw my companion start, hold up a warning finger, and listen attentively. Then, stepping aside, he made me squat down beside him in the grass. A few moments later he pointed forward ; six lions, two full-grown, four half grown, stalked majestically in front of us. They proceeded some fifty yards and then disappeared behind a ridge of hills to the right. We walked forward more quickly, all my faculties on the alert.

Presently I again saw my companion start and put his hand to his gun. Looking past some reeds in front of us, he showed me two quaggas grazing nearly two hundred yards off. He motioned to me to cover the front one whilst he took the hindmost. We fired and each brought down his quarry. I felt sorry that we had slaughtered these animals—needlessly, as I thought—and said so to my companion. "I never kill anything unnecessarily," he replied. "Just walk on ; you'll see presently."

We went on for about eighty yards. "Now turn round and look," he said. I did so. The sky was literally moving ; it was a great swarm of vultures on the wing, circling downwards towards their prey. He answered my unspoken question : "These birds seem to be up there always on the look-out, and appear within ten seconds of my shooting any game."

"But surely you have not made us shoot the quaggas to feed these creatures?"

"No," returned he, "I have not. Let us go on."

We had proceeded some fifty yards, when my friend observed : "Now we will turn over here to the left ; there is something I wish to show you." I obeyed, and we proceeded up a small ascent. Just

as we came to the top I started back, for right at my feet I saw a remarkable sight. It was a large basin of some twenty yards in diameter, bubbling over with clear water, which was discharged through a small outlet at the further side. This stream ran on for a short distance and then disappeared into the earth as mysteriously as it rose. Below us was a footpath leading down to the brink, and all about the water's edge and in the path we saw footprints of birds, wolves, quaggas, deer, buffaloes—and of *human beings*. These last were very small, flat and unshapely—a miserable specimen of the human foot.

Before I could speak, my companion said, "Look back at the game." I complied, and to my amazement saw that round the carcasses were collected, not as I expected a mass of hyenas or vultures, but a crowd of *people*, men and women, busy cutting it up. Everything was going on in perfect order and silence. There was no unseemly scramble; each seemed to know his work and to do it.

One man, evidently the chief, stood on one side to superintend. He gave his commands, and they were implicitly obeyed. It seemed as though it were a sort of "cutting-up" parade. Every now and then they all stopped for a few moments, and then fell-to with renewed vigour. In stature they were very small, barely clad, armed with tiny bows and arrows. The women were a little better clad—in skins mostly. I could distinguish them receiving and cleaning the meat.

At first I was dumbfounded, then charmed, then saddened. I could have wept—the scene was so unique, so weird, so depressing. There was something so uncanny about it all. The sky overhead was swarming with vultures. On the brow of a small rise the six lions had reappeared and stood looking sleepily on. In the midst worked this group of strange beings of the earth. The sky was dull and grey; a low breeze moaned over the tops of the reeds, and we could distinctly hear the sound of the cutting borne to us on the wind. The chief standing on the edge of the group was evidently fearing the parties on all sides. We could see him gaze now up at the vultures, then at the lions, then at us, and he kept his arrow fitted to his bow ready for use. The lions were squatting down on the hill waiting for them to finish. Surely not much of a supper would vultures, hyenas, and these brutes have for themselves!

Here was a proof of man's superiority over the brute—that these had to wait until the first had taken their (the whole) share. But what a poor triumph! This was the thought that saddened me. Were these people only in this respect above the animals in whose midst they were dragging out their existence? In how many others then were they lower? For one thing, they had to live below the ground to escape the claws of the lions.

"It is for them we shot the quaggas," broke in my comrade. "Poor things; it is a hard time, this, for them. The game is gradually being shot or otherwise driven away."

"But who are they?" I asked. "Bushmen?"

"I do not know; judge for yourself," he replied.

"How do they live?"

"As you see—on game we shoot for them, and a little of their own killing. They eat roots also."

"How many of them are there?"

"The whole plain is full of them. There is not a single spot where you do not meet with them. I have shot scores of quaggas and other game, and always seen this result. When they are fat they are full of pranks, and sing at their work. Now they are very hungry and afraid of those beasts opposite to us. I have done much for them, yet they are always suspicious, especially if I am not alone. They do not mind the vultures."

"But where do they live?" I asked.

"I do not know," he replied, "and do not you try to find out, for you never would. I have failed so often; you would also fail. Let us walk on; it is getting late and we are now alone."

I was loth to comply. The water at my feet, the lions, vultures, the people ready to disperse as soon as we were gone, had a strange attraction for me.

"Come on," urged my companion. "These animals have been eyeing you more than is necessary. The people know me because I live in their midst and have been kind to them; but they do not know you. We white men have done them harm enough. My grandfather placed our farm on the spot where their kraal had stood; our cattle graze on their pastures; my father speaks of drawing off this water of theirs to his farm; of digging a canal across their last resort. I will not allow this if I can possibly help it. But how to prevent their sinking deeper and deeper is what I do not know. They are so timorous, one can't reach them."

We hurried off, neither of us speaking a word, until just as we came up to our party he said:

"Do not say anything about what you've seen. I ask it as a favour. Let them live in peace or die in peace as long as they can."

I felt strangely moved that night. My comrades twitted me on my silence; but my mind was continually wandering off. It travelled back to the time when these people were lords of the land, ruling over the beasts, living above the soil, before the farm was planted in the place where their kraal had stood. Then were they a united people, of finer physique, of nobler manners and gentler customs.

But the white man came and deprived them of their own, and nothing was done to better their lot and raise them to a higher level. I felt almost glad not to know more. What I had seen was like a dream, yet it all occurred exactly as I have described it. Never can I forget this curious adventure and the strange people on the Rustenburg plain.

W. J. N.

THE TOWER OF ST. SEPELIAN.

"A SPLENDID view you have here," I remarked, with deplorable lack of originality to the weather-beaten and venerable sexton.

We stood in the wide churchyard, on the top of a high Cornish moor, to which my roamings had led me, at the end of my summer holiday. Lonely, no doubt, and desolate would be the sight in the colder seasons of the year, with over-clouded sky, and rain blurring and blotting hills, and valleys in damp and lifeless mist; and yet more, when snow should cover the bleak slopes, and bury all things beneath a vast winding-sheet of white, ending only with the dull grey sea below.

But on this August evening, the brown and purple of the moors, patched here and there with green, and spotted with golden gorse; the white coach-road winding along the hill-side, and beyond it the bay, dancing in pale blue and white, flanked by the granite cliffs, gleaming almost like chalk in the sunlight, or sinking into pink and brown where the shadows fell, all joined in one glorious display of life and colour, leading up to the bluff square tower of the great church up-reared above us, flushing ruddy-brown in the autumn sunset glow. The solitude, which was the usual portion of Saint Sepelian, was broken this Sunday evening by the groups of villagers straggling up the sides of the moor to church, in the leisurely way of scanty populations; and their voices, floating cheerfully upon the evening air, mingled with the twittering of the birds. Over all flowed the golden brown light of early autumn, and tinged the scene with cheerfulness.

I ought to have gazed and forborne to break in upon the loveliness of the surroundings with a word—has not some great authority pronounced that twaddling in the presence of the beauties of nature is as bad as chattering in church—but conventionality kept its ban upon me, and I reopened the conversation with the aforesaid commonplace.

But my companion, apparently more properly impressed than I, did not at first answer. Regarding myself as committed, I repeated my words, adding: "I should very much like to see it from the top of the tower."

"Yes, sir," replied the quaint old sexton, rousing himself (I like sextons as a race, and find them more equal to their traditional repute than other men); "I shall be very pleased to take you up any day in the week coming, if you're about."

"I'm afraid I must leave for London to-morrow morning," said I. "Couldn't we go up to-night?"

"Well, you see, sir, I can't take you up now, not before service begins; and 'twill be well-nigh dark before they comes out."

"What a pity!" I exclaimed regretfully, gazing at the landscape, and up at the frowning, massive tower. "Wouldn't there be time after service before it grows quite dark? I shouldn't want to stop up there more than five or ten minutes, you know, and I don't get such a chance very often."

"No, sir?" said Tom, considering, and evidently overcome by the eagerness and flattery that were more evident in my tone than in the words. "Well, now, if passon don't take more than fifteen minutes before he wakes 'em for the last hymn, we might just manage it in time, perhaps."

"That's right," I assented cheerfully. "Besides, the moon's coming up to help the twilight out."

"Ah, sir, that may improve the look of the country from off the top, but she won't help you much up the stairs inside. There's an awkward little bit on them stairs; I know some as don't like it in broad daylight, though I could go up myself at midnight just the same, knowing as well as I do where the gaps come. Well, I must be off to see after the last peal. Shall I keep you a seat inside, sir?"

"Yes—no—well, can you give me one close by the door, and I'll slip in quietly." This was rather mean, for my intention was rather to slip out quietly at sermon time, until "passon" should wake them up for the last hymn.

"All right, sir." And he disappeared into the church, while I sat musing on.

It is not easy, of course, to say what, in given circumstances, will be a man's reflections: but mine, and I should think those of many, when confronted with the beauty of nature in her gentler moods, tend mostly in one direction. It is good, we feel, to be alive, and consciousness of enjoyment leads—rightly as I think—to thankfulness, however vaguely felt or expressed inwardly to self. Then, as the natural means of expressing this thankfulness, come good resolves, and sorrow for wasted hours and days. And I should shrewdly suspect that those who have most wasted their time, find their enjoyment at such moments the most tempered with regret. Yet all must long alike for opportunities to live a little longer, and do some good in this beautiful world before they go forth into the great darkness.

As I gazed and mused, the gathering peal of the organ within roused my attention. As the vibration reached me, the first coolness of the evening made itself felt. Yielding to the impulse, I made my way unseen to my corner in the church. Tom spied me at the door, and with noiseless skill pointed me to a chair behind the choir, whence, hidden myself, I could see and hear all. The stately service proceeded: the choir sang, not without tokens of careful teaching, yet with the force and swing of natural musicians. The tenors were rather rough, and inclined to gasp; and the altos occasionally

produced somewhat curious notes : but the outside voices sang with plenty of tone and go, and the basses especially, as Cornish basses do, swelled up with warm rich volumes of sound.

I must, however, confess that when the sermon had began, I stole out again into the gathering twilight, and marked the changes. The colours of the land were sinking into darkening green and brown, the sea into purple and grey : all wrapped in the repose of coming night, though the twilight and the rising moon still showed the view clearly.

Two chords from the organ, and the sound of the wind gasping out of the bellows, proclaim the Amen after the sermon. They are coming out, then. No, not yet : there is a pause, and a hymn begins, sounding even more impressive to my solitude without than within the building. Even the words, being familiar, can be readily distinguished—

“Keep Thou my feet : I do not ask to see
The distant scene : one step enough for me.”

The hymn ended, there was a short pause, and the congregation came out. It did not take long, for the numbers were scanty in proportion to the size of the building : and in five minutes Tom Polgelly was at my side once more. We proceeded to the tower door, and peered up the staircase. Certainly, it was dark enough for midnight ; though outside, for practical purposes, the light seemed scarcely dimmed.

“I doubt I'd better fetch and light a candle, sir,” said Tom.

“Hardly necessary, is it ? There's no room to go wrong,” I answered, laughing, as I drew back from the narrow winding stair.

“Ah, there's an awkward gap or two in the steps presently. They comes to an end up yonder, and there's a turn, and a stone bar across, before they begin again the other way. But you can go on up till the bell-chamber, sir, and I'll be up to you with a light in half-a-minute.”

I groped my way accordingly with due caution up the stairs, tapping them ahead of me with my stick.

Presently, coming to a small landing, I halted and waited for my guide, who seemed to have been delayed in his search for a candle. It was quite dark. After a while, growing tired of waiting, I began to tap around with my stick, to ascertain my position. Soon I found a doorway, doubtless leading into the bell-chamber, the staircase, as usual, being in a corner of the tower. The floor through this doorway seemed to be of wood, not stone, judging by the sound.

As I was making my way in this direction, I carelessly let fall my stick, which I heard clattering far down the steps up which I had come. For a moment I turned round, intending to go down and recover it ; but a bump against the wall surprised me, and made it clear that I had lost my sense of direction, and was helpless in the darkness until my guide should appear. Impatience, however, helped

me to decide that the bell-chamber—could I reach it—would be pleasanter than standing on this narrow landing, with the gap of which Tom had warned me on one side, and the staircase on the other. I had a lively remembrance of having once in the dark, in a strange house, mistaken a door at the head of the back staircase for that of my bedroom, and plunged blindly half-way down the said backstairs with my first step, and the other half in my effort to recover myself. So I groped my way along, as I guessed, toward the bell-chamber.

All at once I was conscious of a curious, gentle pressure of something light, and apparently living, on either shoulder. It was like a hand; so like, that I seemed almost to detect the fingers; and yet it was on both sides, and as though diffused also across my back, though slightly. At the same time a partial drowsiness attacked me, and with it some loss of control over my will; so that when I moved again, it was as much in obedience to the guidance of the pressure as of my will. The darkness was complete.

In wonder, I stretched my arms round and about to find the cause of this strange effect, but without success. I passed my hands over my shoulders and back, but could perceive no body except my own. Still the pressure was there, light but decided. I wondered not to find myself wondering more at it, as I walked up and down, seeming now and then almost to float through the air, held up by the gentle, caressing touch on either shoulder. High thoughts, kindling and ennobling, if so I may describe my own, took possession of me. Time was forgotten. According to the usual feeling of those kept waiting, the interval seemed long rather than short; not that I was impatient, for there seemed ample time for many leisurely fancies and longings to flit through the mind; as the doings of several days or even years may proceed without hurry in a dream lasting but a few minutes.

Meanwhile, the unseen hand or hands continued their guiding pressure, urging me sometimes a little to one side or the other. The strangest part of it all was the entirely pleasurable, comforting nature of the sensation. So far from there being anything startling in it, it was actually reassuring, and seemed, as it were, to deprecate its own mystery: filling the air with trust and repose, to which I willingly—for who could resist such loving persuasion—resigned myself for what, as I have said, seemed some considerable time.

Suddenly there came a moving glint of light upon the tower wall, and steps and shouting roused me from my thoughts. "Where are you, sir, where have you got to?" shouted Tom's voice, sounding strangely troubled and anxious up the stairs.

"Here I am," I shouted back, making towards the place where the light showed the doorway. As I neared it, the feeling of the hands upon my shoulder grew lighter, and disappeared as I came within a yard of the doorway. Polgelly stood on the landing, holding the candle and with looks of amazement, and I fancied, also of fear, on his face

"You didn't ought to play these tricks, sir," he exclaimed. "I couldn't think what had become of you. Why didn't you stop in the bell-chamber as I told you, instead of frightening me like this?"

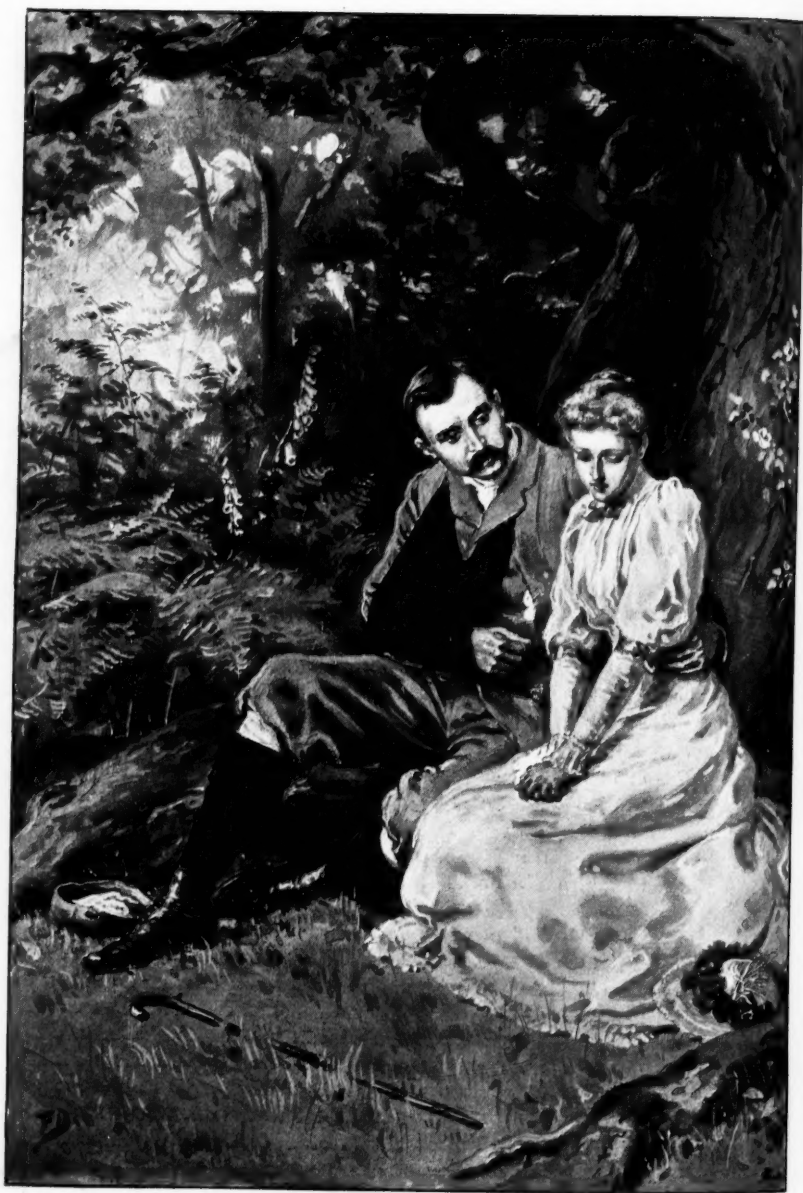
"How do you mean? why, here I am; what's the matter?" I asked, in utter astonishment, the more as I was only now recalled to a sense of ordinary matters.

"Why, look where you're a standing!" he exclaimed almost angrily. And as his light flooded the inside of the tower, I followed his advice, more literally than he had probably intended, and looked, for the first time, towards the floor. Floor, did I say? There was no floor, at any rate till twenty feet below. I was standing on a beam, of which three or four ran in each direction from wall to wall, not more than six or eight inches across. Below, were the great bells, with all their machinery; and even as I looked, the hour clanged forth as if to shake me off my narrow perch. But in the very moment when I swayed (for I was still on the beam, and by no means out of all danger) the unseen pressure once again made itself faintly felt, impelling me forward to the safe landing-place. Then, with a parting touch—could it be of blessing?—on my head, it was gone, no more to return.

Even now, long years after, I cannot fully realise the danger; at the moment, it scarcely seemed to affect me at all. Old Tom Polgelly was quite shaken for the time, but I was hardly moved, except with a light, cheerful feeling of gratitude to my protector; for I have never been able to doubt the presence and kindly offices of some protecting power. Gradually I came to see that I must have walked for some yards to and fro in the dark, along the narrow beam, on which only the coolest heads could have successfully ventured in full light. A fall must inevitably have brought either death, or injuries almost worse than death in their results. In looking back at my adventure, although no braver than my fellow men, I am conscious of no tremor, fear, or shuddering at the peril of my position or the risk of so dreadful a fall. Nor could the most fearless of men be more unmoved in danger than was I, when held up in my passage along the narrow way by that unseen, protecting hand.

R. R. OTTLEY.





"DO YOU REALLY MEAN THAT, GEORGE?" SHE ASKED.

